Problems of COMMUNISM

Totalitarianism and Economics in China

RODERICK MACFARQUHAR

Forty Years of the Komsomol

S. I. PLOSS
ALLEN KASSOF

Communism in Latin America

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Totalitarianism via Industrialization?

The Case of Communist China

By Roderick MacFarquhar

EDITORS' NOTE: The most recent events in China have again thrust into relief the problem of the relationship between Communist economic policies and totalitarianism. Some observers have maintained, for instance, that the more belligerent Chinese posture in foreign affairs and the silencing of "rightist oppositionists" inside the country are directly attributable to Peiping's decision to proceed with full collectivization and industrialization. Thus, they assert, recent events re-emphasize the primal importance of economics in the growth of totalitarianism—in China as much as in Russia, or for that matter, in any country faced with the need to industrialize in a relatively short period of time. The article below focusses its attention precisely on this theoretical problem *as reflected in the practice of Communist China.* In the author's opinion, the widely-held view of the universal primacy of economics is disproved by an examination of how Communist totalitarianism evolved in China.

THE INDUSTRIALIZATION programs of India and Communist China have developed into a race with possibly far-reaching implications for the future political complexion of Asia. The Chinese Communist rulers are far too discreet to admit this, but in India itself, as well as in the West, the view is being freely expressed that the relative progress of the two countries toward the goal of industrialization is a test of the efficacy of the rival political systems and methods of totalitarianism and democracy. Should India prove unable to carry through its program while China succeeds, it is argued, more and more Asians, including the Indians themselves, will become convinced that only by the adoption of totalitarian methods can their centuries-old heritage of poverty and backwardness be rapidly overcome; and this, in turn, could lead to Communist governments being voted into power.[1] Although a somewhat special case, the example of the Indian state of Kerala lends force to this argument by demonstrating that Communists *can* get voted into power.

From the Marxist standpoint, this view of the situation has a certain irony. An essential ingredient of classic Marxism was the theory that Communist revolution would take place in highly-developed industrial countries. Not only, however, has this prediction long been falsified by historical fact, but the further spread of communism is now thought to depend upon how successfully it performs the very task which Marx maintained would be performed by capitalism. If the Communists were to achieve power in any of the uncommitted Asian countries on the basis of an apparently superior record in accomplishing industrial development, it would, indeed, be a case of the "economic base" determining the political "superstructure"—but not at all in the way anticipated by Marx.

The Djilas Theory and China

In this connection, the imprisoned former Yugoslav Communist leader, Milovan Djilas, has advanced the argument that the same un-Marxist kind of economic

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[1] For expressions of this view, see dispatches from the correspondents in India of the *Manchester Guardian,* September 2, 1957; *New York Times,* September 29, 1957; *Christian Science Monitor* (Boston), October 2, 1957.

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determinism was operative also in the major Communist revolutions of the past. In his book, *The New Class,* he writes:

These revolutions did not occur because new, let us say socialist, relationships were already existing in the economy, or because capitalism was "overdeveloped." On the contrary. They did occur because capitalism was not fully developed and because it was not able to carry out the industrial transformation of the country.[2]

Djilas, it should be noted, excludes from consideration those countries where Communist rule was imposed by the Red Army and is referring specifically to the Communist revolutions in the Soviet Union, China, and Yugoslavia. In these three countries, he states, there were "urgent and specific concrete reasons—international, economic, political—for revolution," but he holds that the "basic" reason, common to all of them, was the "vital need for industrial change." [3]

This writer does not propose to discuss the Djilas theory in detail. Suffice it to say that it seems to present an over-simplified picture, and to leave much unexplained. For one thing, there are many "under-developed" countries in the world; why, then, should the "basic" reason advanced by Djilas have been operative in only three? Certainly, so far as the future is concerned, one would not question that the attractions of the Communist road to industrialization—particularly the Chinese Communist version—would likely be a factor in the eventual emergence of any new Communist regimes in Asia. However, if one turns to the past, one finds that in China—now regarded as the prime model for this sort of development elsewhere—the impelling force of the Communist revolution was quite different. There, the rise of communism and the erection of a totalitarian political system did not occur because the Chinese saw in them a magic key to industrial progress; the Chinese Communist leaders adopted their faith for political rather than economic reasons.

Indeed, it would have been difficult for the builders of the Chinese Communist movement to discern in Marxism a blueprint for industrialization. Marx obviously had left no guide to the industrialization of a backward country since he imagined that this would everywhere take place under capitalism, as it had in Britain. For that matter, apart from a general endorsement of the concept of planning, he left few hints as to how even an already industrialized country would be run under communism, let alone an under-developed one. The Russian Communists perforce had to find out, by trial and error, how to develop their country;[4] and the classic Stalinist formula for industrialization—priority for the development of heavy industry at the expense of consumer goods, coupled with the collectivization of agriculture to permit the extraction of surplus capital for financing industrial expansion—did not begin to emerge until 1928, eleven years after the Bolshevik Revolution. The important point to note here is that this also was seven years after the founding of the Chinese Communist Party.

The Mainspring of Chinese Communism

As a matter of fact, until 1917 the Chinese intellectuals had virtually ignored Marxism because it was so obviously irrelevant to the Chinese scene. Then, the Russian revolution changed this attitude by demonstrating how a group of intellectuals could seize power. China at the time was divided under the rule of rival warlords, and the hopes created by the progressive political ideas of Sun Yat-sen had been dampened by the impotence of his disorganized following. For the patriotic Chinese intellectual aspiring to regain his traditional role as a member of the ruling elite, the Russian revolution thus seemed to hold many valuable lessons. However, interest in communism was slow in growing.

The decisive factor in stimulating this interest was the anti-imperialist stand of the Bolshevik regime. The relevance of Lenin's theory of imperialism suddenly seemed glaringly obvious when, in 1919, the other Allied Powers awarded Germany's former rights and interests in the Chinese province of Shantung to Japan.[5] This action evoked the widespread protest demonstrations by university students known as the May Fourth Movement, and many of the participants, among them Mao Tse-tung, subsequently followed two prominent intellectual leaders, Ch'en Tu hsiu and Li Ta-chao, into the newly-formed Chinese Communist Party.[6] The same point stands out from a testimonial by Chu Teh, now

[2] Milovan Djilas, *The New Class,* Thames and Hudson, London, 1957, p. 19.

[3] *Ibid.,* pp. 12-13.

[4] For a discussion of this point, see E. H. Carr, *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917-23,* MacMillan & Co. Ltd., London, 1952, pp. 3-10.

[5] Benjamin I. Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao,* Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1952, Chapter 1.

[6] Mao himself acknowledged his debt to these two men, the original founders of the CCP. See Edgar Snow, *Red Star Over China,* Gollancz, London, 1937, p. 154.

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deputy head of state under Mao. He told the American authoress, Agnes Smedley, that he had been won over to communism at a time when he knew nothing of its principles, simply because the Communist Party was attacked by "the imperialists" and *ipso facto* must be good.[7]

For its own part, the Comintern was fully aware of the revolutionary potential of Asian nationalism and of its preoccupation with the immediate goal of liberation from foreign encroachment. Accordingly, it made every effort, in its propaganda, to emphasize the anti-imperialist content of Communist doctrine. There was no attempt to put across the idea that communism provided a blueprint for industrialization; rather, it was suggested that freedom from imperialist exploitation would, of itself, bring prosperity and economic progress.[8]

The fact that the early Chinese Communists were not attracted to communism because of any claims it made in the economic sphere indicates a context to the Chinese Communist revolution different from that implied by Djilas' theory. One can cite as further evidence the fact that the Chinese Communists first gained widespread support among the intelligentsia in the 1930's, by taking what appeared to be a firmer stand against Japanese aggression than did the Kuomintang. Admittedly, the final Communist victory was the product of the particular factors alluded to by Djilas. But its basic and original impetus came, not from a conscious need for industrialization, but from the urge to attain political autonomy and stability which the Kuomintang, for reasons not always under its control, was unable to supply

Of course, the early Chinese Communists could not have been unaware of the importance of economic development as a means of attaining a status of equality with the Western powers. During the last decades of the Manchu dynasty, this idea had been advanced by reformers who were alarmed at the ease with which Western ships and cannon could subdue Chinese troops. But both the Manchu reformers and the founders of the Chinese Communist Party saw economic development as part of a more general reform of the political fabric of Chinese society. This is readily understandable, for the idea that industrial strength is the key to power is a peculiarly western one. For the Chinese with centuries of Confucian thinking behind them, it was long a natural habit to ascribe national disasters to the failings of the ruler and the men governing the country. However, failure to achieve a remedy through attempts at "self-strengthening" indicated that it was not just the state of the state system, but the system iself, which required alteration. Finally, as contacts with the West increased, modern reformers like Sun Yat-sen, and later the Communists, sought in foreign political doctrines the cure for China's ills.[9]

Chinese Totalitarianism: Its Inspiration

If the Chinese Communists did not originally turn to Marxism-Leninism to provide them with an economic blueprint, neither did they fashion their totalitarian state as an instrument for putting into execution the Stalinist formula for industrialization. In the Soviet Union itself, it should be remembered, at least the foundations of totalitarianism had been laid some years before the institution of Stalin's first Five-Year Plan. In China, too, these foundations were established long before the Chinese Communists initiated their own first Five-Year Plan along Stalinist lines, three years after attaining power in 1949.

In their *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy,* the Harvard political scientists, Karl J. Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski, point to six characteristics which, they suggest, are "generally recognized to be common to totalitarian dictatorships." These are: an official, all-embracing ideology; a single mass party led typically by one man; a system of terroristic police control; party control of the media of mass communication; party control of the army and of arms; and party control of the economy.[10] The development of these characteristics may be more or less gradual, but according to the two scholars' analysis, there is a point at which the totalitarian pattern becomes so firmly fixed as to be virtually irreversible. This they term the point of "totalitarian breakthrough."

Friedrich and Brzezinski maintain that in the Soviet Union the "breakthrough" occurred only in 1928, a date which conveniently ties it in both with the adoption of the harsher policies of the first Five-Year Plan and with Stalin's elimination of Trotsky, which marked the leadership's first resort to violent methods of crushing

[7] Agnes Smedley, *The Great Road: The Life and Times of Chu Teh,* Monthly Review Press, New York, 1956, p. 144.

[8] Malcolm Kennedy, *A Short History of Communism in Asia,* Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1957, p. 23.

[9] It is interesting to note that Sun Yat-sen, who received a Western education, was one of the few Chinese political thinkers who ever entertained the idea that economic progress, of itself, would end China's weakness. See Ssu-yu Teng and John K. Fairbank, *China's Response to the West,* Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1954, pp. 223-7.

[10] Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1956, pp. 9-10.

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ideological opposition within the party itself.[11] Whenever the "breakthrough", however, the essential features of the Soviet totalitarian regime had certainly begun to take shape well before 1928. Indeed, by 1921-22, about the time the Chinese Communist Party was being formed, the Bolsheviks had already eliminated their political opponents, assumed control of the mass media of communication, and buttressed their position by the use of the secret police and control of the army.[12]

Thus, it is logical to assume that the Chinese Communists, who from the start were under the political guidance of agents of the Comintern, must have been taught to accept such a system as the normal form of Communist rule. In fact, the first concrete evidence indicating how the Communists would rule China—the constitution of the Kiangsi Soviet Republic in 1931—clearly establishes that the sole dictatorship of the Communist Party was accepted as axiomatic.[13] Beyond this, it is admittedly difficult to determine, from the limited evidence that has emerged, the extent to which the Kiangsi Soviet, and later the Communist governments of the northwest border regions, exhibited the six features of totalitarianism. Nevertheless, judging from the speed with which the Chinese Communists erected a faithful replica of the Soviet system after winning national power, it seems safe to assume that these features had appeared in the earlier Communist governments to a marked degree.

It is hardly necessary to point out that this growth of Chinese totalitarianism had nothing to do with an economic policy of rapid industrialization. During their Kiangsi and Yenan days, the Communists controlled no industrial areas—in fact, no industry at all. But they did have problems of political control to deal with, and naturally enough they dealt with them in the Soviet manner.

One would not deny, of course, that in the Chinese Communist state erected after 1949 there have been some surface modifications of the Soviet model. The Communist Party is not the only political party: there are eight non-Communist parties with a newspaper organ which supposedly speaks for them. Non-Communists hold government posts and are represented on the National Defense Council. But as a number of writers have pointed out, and as the severe "anti-rightist" campaign of last year confirmed, these modifications are purely formal, meaningless concessions to the history of the Chinese Communist revolution.[14] They in no way indicate that Communist China is not a fully-developed totalitarian state.

The Impact of Industrialization

Thus far, the author's argument has been that economic factors, and more specifically an impulsion toward industrialization, were not responsible for the emergence of Chinese Communist totalitarianism. However, there still remains the question of whether the Mao regime's embarkation upon a program of Stalinist industrialization did not mark a point at which there was a significant intensification of its totalitarian features. In other words, did not the industrialization program operate to make the regime more totalitarian than it had been before?

Certainly, in the Soviet Union, the launching of the first Five-Year Plan in 1928 brought with it an immediate increase in the oppressiveness of the regime. To squeeze the maximum out of the workers, Stalin substituted piece rates of pay for time rates and introduced "socialist emulation" and "stakhanovism"; the trade unions were transformed from bodies with some autonomy and genuine concern for the workers into mere party instruments for disciplining the workers and exhorting them to greater production effort. In agriculture, the peasants were driven into collectives so that the grain supply could be brought under state control. Millions of them starved when forced to hand over their grain at the point of a gun; some five million others were deported to remote areas to form the forced labor battalions whose ranks were later swelled by the party purges of the 1930's.

Turning to Communist China, we see a different sequence of development: there, many of the harsher features which became characteristic of Soviet—or, more precisely, Stalinist—totalitarianism *after* the start of forced industrialization in 1928 were already reflected in Chinese Communist policy *before* the Mao regime launched its own first Five-Year Plan in 1953. A look at the development of the regime's policies in a few key areas after 1949 will serve to illustrate the broad statement that these policies took Stalinist principles as their initial point of departure and thereafter continued a

[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 295, 299.

[12] Merle Fainsod, *How Russia is Ruled*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1953, pp. 91-2 and 122-7.

[13] Conrad Brandt, Benjamin Schwartz and John K. Fairbank, *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism*, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1952, pp. 217-24.

[14] See, *e.g.*, Harold C. Hinton, "The 'Democratic Parties': End of an Experiment?", *Problems of Communism*, No. 3, 1957, pp. 39-46.

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fairly steady and constant evolution along Stalinist lines —not without some vacillation to be sure, but clearly without any sudden, sharp change of course such as the Soviet switch-over from NEP to the policies associated with industrialization.

The evolution of the Mao regime's labor policies demonstrates this very plainly. From the very beginning, the Chinese Communists followed Stalinist precedent in gradually introducing piece-rate wages, first in the main industrial area of Manchuria and subsequently in the areas south of the Great Wall. By 1953, the first year of the initial Five-Year Plan, 46 percent of all Manchurian workers had been brought under the system, with probably a somewhat lower ratio for the rest of China.[15] Progress thereafter would appear to have continued without marked acceleration, for in 1956 it was officially ordered that all work capable of being calculated on piece rates should "be fully, or mostly, brought into this system" during 1957, the last year of the first plan.[16] Stakhanovism and emulation contests were likewise well-established practices before the plan become operative, as evidenced by a government announcement that 80 percent of all workers and employees joined in a "patriotic" drive to increase production in the first half of 1952.[17]

Nor did the start of industrialization mean any change in basic trade union policy. Even before 1949, the Chinese Communists had subordinated trade unions under their jurisdiction to strict party control, and the Communist union leaders soon confirmed that the party's assumption of state power meant that all unions would function as party instruments with the primary task of struggling for increased production.[18] Steps to enforce labor discipline also were increasingly evident beginning with the introduction in 1950 of provisional regulations concerning labor disputes; thereafter, strikes apparently all but ceased under the threat that strikers could be accused of "counterrevolution."[19] It is unquestionably true that the advent of the Five-Year Plan brought a further tightening of these policies, reflected in 1953 by increased insistence upon the unions' duty to augment production,[20] and in 1954 by the creation of workers' courts specifically charged with enforcing labor discipline.[21] Nevertheless, these moves merely meant a somewhat more severe application of policies which had been fundamentally Stalinist from the beginning.

The Stalinist March Forward

Turning to agricultural policy, the picture is again one of firm, though cautious, advance from the start. The initial land reform phase, begun in 1950 and marked by the use of violent methods, asserted party control in the villages and set the stage for gradual collectivization. The decision to embark upon this next phase was actually taken in 1951, indicating that collectivization was the party's aim all along, but was not announced to the public until early in 1953, the first year of the Five-Year Plan. This delay and the cautious, step-by-step advance toward full collectivization envisaged by the program when finally announced were clearly indicative of the Chinese Communist leaders' desire to avoid the disasters which had accompanied the precipitate Soviet collectivization drive after 1928. The start of the Five-Year Plan did not affect this caution; it signalled no sudden leap forward. Indeed, even Mao Tse-tung's speech of July 1955, in which he called for a speed-up of the collectivization program, did not envisage completion of semi-socialist collectivization (*i.e.,* the level of "lower-stage cooperatives" in which the peasants still own their land though it is farmed collectively) before 1960, nine years after the initial decision was taken.[22] The quickened pace of collectivization in the winter of 1955-56 in response to Mao's call, moreover, does not appear attributable to any new, widespread resort to terrorism specifically aimed at the peasantry, although some recalcitrant peasants undoubtedly were among the victims of the general 1955 drive against "counter-revolutionaries." Rather, it was the result of the continuous pressure, backed up by occasional bloody campaigns, that had been exerted by the regime ever since 1949.

Other hardships apart from collectivization had been imposed on the peasantry from the first years of the Communist regime, most notably corvée labor. Between 1950 and 1952, several million peasants "volunteered" for highway construction work in Hopei Province

[15] Yuan-li Wu, *An Economic Survey of Communist China,* Bookman Associates, London, 1956, pp. 442-3.

[16] Quoted in Ygael Gluckstein, *Mao's China,* George Allen & Unwin, London, 1957, p. 230.

[17] Cited in K. C. Chao, *The Mass Organizations in Communist China* (mimeographed), Center for International Studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, 1953, p. 40.

[18] Gluckstein, *op. cit.,* p. 233.

[19] Wu, *op. cit.,* p. 438.

[20] Chao, *op. cit.,* pp. 35-6.

[21] Richard L. Walker, *China Under Communism,* George Allen & Unwin, London, 1956, p. 173.

[22] "Agricultural Cooperativization in Communist China," *Current Background* (American Consulate General, Hongkong), No. 373, January 1956.

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alone.[23] By the end of 1951, an estimated five million peasants were being conscripted annually to work on water conservation projects.[24]

Finally, if we turn to the general measures of repression employed by the regime, we also find them enforced all along, without any sudden tightening up following the start of industrialization. The first regulations for the corrective labor system, for instance, were drawn up in 1950, and already in March of that year the first huge corrective labor camp was established. The scope of these regulations was gradually widened as the regime inexorably moved forward to discipline successive groups within the population.

The three major campaigns in which outright terror was employed—the land reform drive and the two campaigns against "counterrevolutionaries" — occurred in 1950, 1951, and 1955, respectively. The first two thus preceded the enforcement of the first Five-Year Plan, and the third, coming only in the third year of the plan, could hardly have been aimed specifically at backing up its enforcement. The word "specifically" injected here is an important qualification since all measures augmenting popular discipline and obedience obviously have the ultimate effect of helping the regime to carry out its industrialization policies, which demand public sacrifice of present benefits for the sake of the industrial El Dorado of the future. Nonetheless, it remains true that industrialization, of itself, caused no evident increase in the use of terror.

By and large, the most repressive phase of Chinese Communist rule thus far was the 18-month period which started at the beginning of 1951. This was the period in which the Communists liquidated the bulk of their more dangerous opponents and hounded into submission the intellectuals and businessmen who had chosen to stay on the mainland either because they had no other choice or because they believed in the regime's early promises. It was a period during which the Communists consolidated their hold on the country, not a period of radically new economic policies.

The Sino-Soviet Contrast

In any case, it is quite clear that 1953, the first year of the Five-Year Plan, did not herald an abrupt hardening of the domestic "line" in China as the year 1928 did in the Soviet Union. Indeed, one of the severest American critics of the Mao regime has described 1953 as the "year of retrenchment."[25] The reason for this is simple: there never was, in Communist China, a period preceding the first plan which was comparable to the Soviet NEP period of relatively liberal labor, agricultural and political policies. The Chinese Communist leaders viewed the first three years of political consolidation and economic recovery and the succeeding period of industrialization as one continuum, and they employed from the start methods and policies which had been introduced in Russia only a decade after the revolution. Indeed, by 1949, they had accepted these methods and policies as the normal formulae for governing a Communist state; as their grip on the country grew stronger, they merely pushed further ahead along the original course.

In China, then, Mao started with Stalinism. There have been intervals of terror and of relaxation, but these have been tactical variations within the framework of Stalinism, not basic changes of strategy on the order of the change from NEP to Stalinism. A striking illustration of this is provided by the single major theoretical modification introduced by Mao since 1949—his recognition in early 1957 that there could be "non-antagonistic contradictions" within the ranks of the people under socialism. In his much-discussed speech setting forth this doctrine, Mao indicated that a practical expression of it would be the tolerance of small-scale strikes as a means of ensuring rectification of abuses of authority and easing tensions.[26] Thus, the doctrine may be said to have moderated the Chinese Communist application of just one of the minor features of Stalinist totalitarianism. However, as the unwary Chinese intellectuals and others who construed the doctrine more broadly were soon to find out in the anti-rightist campaign, it affected none of the more basic Stalinist attributes of Maoist totalitarianism.

But if the Mao regime embodied all the basic elements of Stalinist totalitarianism, at least in embryo, from the start, it still seems to lag behind the earlier development of its Soviet model in one respect. In their study cited earlier, Friedrich and Brzezinski suggest (p. 295) that in Communist China the "totalitarian breakthrough" was reached at the point "where the purge of any competitors to Mao Tse-tung's absolute dictatorial control occurred." The case, however, is not so clear-cut, for the historical

[23] Ronald Hsia, *The Role of Labor-Intensive Projects in China's Capital Formation* (mimeographed), Center for International Studies, M.I.T., Cambridge, 1954, p. 4.

[24] Karl A. Wittfogel, "Forced Labor in Communist China," *Problems of Communism*, No. 4, 1956, pp. 34-42.

[25] Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

[26] Mao's speech of February 27, 1957, "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Within the Ranks of the People," published by New China News Agency, June 18, 1957.

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record indicates that Mao has never relied, as did Stalin, upon the periodic and irrational use of the purge weapon to maintain his grip on the reins of power. Even the 1955 purge of Kao Kang and Jao Shu-shih as leaders of an alleged "anti-party conspiracy" does not appear, from the evidence, to have been engineered by Mao to crush a challenge to his own position of primacy.[27] Certainly, there is no indication that Mao's colleagues today occupy the perillous position that Stalin's associates did in the mid-1930's; indeed, there have been hints that they can even overrule Mao in some instances.[28] In this sense, the final "breakthrough" to Stalinism in its fully-matured form has not yet occurred in China, and very probably will come only when Mao dies. Liu Shao-ch'i, evidently Mao's choice to succeed him as Malenkov was Stalin's, is not likely to be allowed to rule the party without challenge; hence, the probable result will be a real struggle for power accompanied by party purges similar to those unleashed by Stalin in the 1930's. Economic issues may well figure in providing outward areas of dispute among the contenders, but the struggle itself will derive, in the last analysis, from the inherent nature of a system which abhors a vacuum at the top.

Asia and the Chinese Example

The inescapable conclusion from all this is that at no point in the development of Chinese Communist totalitarianism—past or present (and the writer is tempted to add, future)—have economic factors been (or will they be) decisive. What has been decisive so far has been the the Chinese leaders' partiality, primarily for political reasons, to the Stalinist form of totalitarianism. Mao has accepted the legacies of both Lenin and Stalin: for him, Leninism and Stalinism are the normal *political* tools with which to run the Chinese Communist state, whatever economic policies may be the order of the day. One could guess fairly safely that, even if Mao had decided that China needed a decade before embarking upon its industrialization program, he still would have employed in 1949 the severer methods which Stalin made part of Soviet totalitarianism only after 1928.

Thus, we are brought back to the paradox mentioned in the early part of this article—the curious fact that Communist China, where neither the original rise of communism nor the emergence of Maoist totalitarianism were ascribable to economic factors, is now recognized as the major spur to the spread of communism in other under-developed Asian nations, precisely because of the appeal of Chinese Communist achievement in the field of economic development. The reason for this, of course, lies in an essential difference of outlook between the founders of Chinese communism in the early 1920's and the Asian intellectuals and politicians of today. In the early 1920's, the major problem for most Asians, including the Chinese, was how to gain independence from foregn colonial rule or—in China's case—foreign limitations upon their sovereignty; and those who joined Communist parties then did so because they saw in communism a tool with which to accomplish that aim.

Today, little remains of the old colonial empires in Asia. The crucial problem for the Asian nations is no longer the recovery of their political autonomy; it is how to engineer the economic development needed to set that autonomy on a firm foundation. With this change in outlook has come an inevitable change in communism's appeal to Asians. Now, admiration among them for the Soviet Union stems not so much from communism's anti-imperialist stand—though this still exerts a potent influence in the Middle East and Africa—as from the USSR's success in lifting itself by its own bootstraps to the position of the second most powerful industrial country after the United States. They are watching Communist China with a much more direct and compelling interest, for China is an Asian nation and is attempting to prove that the Soviet model will also work in Asia.

As long as India and the other non-Communist Asian nations can achieve the economic development they desire within a democratic political framework, they undoubtedly will not heed the call of Soviet or Chinese totalitarianism. The danger will come should democratically-controlled economic development fail to produce desired results. The danger, it should be added, need not necessarily come from a Communist revolutionary coup, but rather from a voluntary attempt by the Asian countries to find a solution in the piecemeal adoption of the economic but not the political methods of totalitarianism. The question which they would then have to ask themselves—and it is one to which history provides no clue—is whether they would not end up with a full-fledged totalitarian system just the same, only via a road the opposite of the Soviet. In Russia, the Leninist political revolution passed over into the Stalinist economic revolution. In Asia, the process might conceivably be reversed.

[27] For a full analysis of the Kao-Jao purge, see Peter S. H. Tang, *Communist China Today: Domestic and Foreign Policies*, Thames & Hudson, London, 1957, pp. 81-92.

[28] On the latter point, see the author's "Criticism and Counter-Criticism in China," *The World Today* (London), November 1957, p. 498.

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Forty Years of the Komsomol

EDITORS' NOTE: The two articles below mark this journal's contribution—albeit a somewhat critical one—to the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the Communist Youth League, to be celebrated in the Soviet Union in October of this year. In the first, Mr. Ploss traces the development of the Komsomol from a militant organization of revolutionary youth to a sprawling, colorless and apathetic "transmission belt" of the CPSU. In the second, Mr. Kassof examines some of the recent difficulties faced by the leadership of the Komsomol, such as admission problems, lack of ideological fervor, opposition tendencies within the League itself as well as among Soviet youth at large, *etc.* For previous articles dealing with Soviet youth, the reader is referred to "Youth vs. the Regime—Conflict in Values," by Mr. Kassof, and "Patterns of Nonconformity," co-authored by S. C. and P. Utechin, which appeared in *Problems of Communism,* issue No. 3, May-June, 1957.

From Youthful Zeal to Middle Age

By S. I. Ploss

FORTY YEARS AGO this coming October 29, several scores of delegates representing some 22,000 members of 120 Russian youth groups met in an unheated barracks in Moscow to join forces for common action. The organization they created—later impressively named the "All-Union Leninist Communist League of Youth," or Komsomol by contraction—has since come to constitute one of the most ubiquitous forces on the Soviet scene. It has directly touched the lives of millions of Soviet people, and indirectly has affected additional millions of outsiders, as the model for mobilizing and controlling youth populations wherever Communist parties have assumed power. How this huge organization evolved from its modest origins, how it was harnessed for service to the Soviet state, and what its impact has been on Soviet young people is the subject of the present paper.

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Forerunners of Komsomol: 1917

Like many other later Soviet institutions, the Komsomol had its seeds in the pre-Bolshevik phase of the 1917 revolution. The wave of social agitation and activity which washed over Russia after the March overthrow of Tsarism led to the spontaneous formation of various interest groups, among youth as well as adults. First to organize themselves were young laborers in urban Russia and mainly Petrograd, the buzzing center of post-March activity. Soon the trend spread to the villages and rural areas, where teachers, craft-workers, and the more advanced peasant youngsters took the lead in forming youth associations. The vast majority of these groups, both urban and rural, initially pursued merely social, cultural or recreational objectives.

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The foremost example of such associations was an organization of youthful factory workers called "Work and Light," formed in Petrograd through the efforts of a young student named P. Shevtsov, in cooperation with a number of youth organizers. Although Work and Light styled itself a "proletarian" organization, it was essentially apolitical in spirit; its program aimed mainly at improving educational and recreational opportunities for young workers. Preaching that the "final victory" over capitalism should be left to the older generation, the leaders of Work and Light held that the main duty of youth was "by work and by the acquisition of knowledge to strengthen the revolution, because creative toil and the impartial light of science have been and always will be the sole bases of life, the foundations of man's betterment and culture." [1]

Events, however, moved too quickly for the moderates of Work and Light; young Bolsheviks soon moved to infiltrate and to launch a protest movement within the organization, charging it with "political and social unawareness." Basing their own program on the magnetic demand that adolescents be enfranchised and be granted a six-hour working day, the Bolshevik dissidents—mainly under the leadership of an organizer named Oskar Ryvkin—spearheaded the formation of a rival "Socialist League of Working Youth" (SLWY) in early July 1917; in the next month Work and Light fell apart, and on August 31, a meeting of representatives of the city's working-youth groups voted for adherence to the SLWY.

Meanwhile the Bolshevik party leadership—out to elicit support wherever it could—decided to adopt a policy of "benevolent neutrality" rather than of rivalry toward the wide variety of remaining youth groups. This policy, supported among others by Lenin's wife, Krupskaia, was based on the view that youth could be induced "to play an active role only within their own organizations" [2]—and these, it was confidently expected, could be won over to bolshevism. Following the endorsement of this stand, the party issued a resolution at its Sixth Congress in August advertising itself as a champion of youth's "active participation in the economic and political struggle of the working class" [3]—a move which was a masterstroke of propaganda since no other political party had at that time issued a direct appeal to youth.

More, however, out of dissatisfaction with their economic condition than out of gratitude for practical support, the working youth followed the Bolshevik lead to a "better tomorrow." Within a week after its seizure of power in November, the Bolshevik regime decreed measures to redress the grievances aired by the SLWY: it established limits on working hours and on employment conditions for adolescents, enfranchised 18 and 19-year-old workers, and granted them tuition-free entrance to the universities.

Unification from Below

While these reforms were welcomed, they proved difficult to implement or to enforce in the anarchical atmosphere of succeeding months, and pressures soon developed within the youth groups for a single, centralized organization. In August 1918 representatives of SLWY and of a workers' group in Moscow announced the formation of a "Bureau for the Convocation of an All-Russian Congress of the Leagues of Worker and Peasant Youth." That this was the proponents' own idea and in fact took the party leadership by surprise is indicated by various pieces of evidence pertinent to the ensuing preparations for the Congress. In any event, the Bolshevik command gave its approval, probably because it could not afford to alienate any source of support in the face of the anti-Bolshevik military threat; in fact, it may even have welcomed the establishment of a central organization as an aid in controlling resistive youth elements.

The First Komsomol Congress sat in session from October 29 to November 4, 1918.[4] As might be expected, the great majority of the 194 delegates were Bolshevik sympathizers: three-quarters of those old enough to vote listed themselves as supporters of Lenin's party, and some 85 to 90 percent claimed worker or peasant origin. Forty-nine delegates represented non-partisan or rival socialist groups. The jargon of proletarian internationalism combined with a good bit of youthful self-flattery as prominent notes in the oratory of the Congress; for instance, the statement:

By its very nature youth is the more revolutionary element of the working class. . . . The fate of the proletarian movement at large depends on the youth movement.

Among the issues discussed the most controversial was whether outright adoption of the Communist label would discourage some youths from affiliation; the advocates won out overwhelmingly with such arguments as:

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[1] P. F. Kudelli and G. M. Driazgov, eds., *Leninskoe Pokolenie* (Generation of Lenin), Leningrad, 1925, p. 63.

[2] *Sezdy RKP o Molodezhi* (Congresses of the Russian Communist Party on the Youth), Moscow-Leningrad, 1924, p. 10.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

[4] Information on the Congress is from official records later published as *Pervyi Vserossiskii Sezd RKSM* (First All-Russian Congress of the All-Russian Communist League of Youth), Moscow-Leningrad, 1926.

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. . . any organization desirous of taking a real, active part in political affairs must have a definite political countenance. . . . Now there is no labor movement outside communism. All other currents in the working class have been rejected.[5]

That all 15 members and six of the seven alternates of the league's first Central Committee were Communist Party members suggests that the gathering's Bolshevik element conspired to deny office to non-party delegates. There is no evidence, however, that this "ganging-up" took place at the party's command; more likely, it was an effort of the pro-regime majority to prove their organization worthy of utmost political confidence.

The Onset of Party Pressure

From the party's point of view, however, there soon proved to be doubt on this score. While the new Komsomols and their leaders were enthusiastically loyal, they were young people full of ideas and the desire for action, and they soon exhibited independent tendencies hardly to the party's liking. For instance, when in February 1919 the regime ruled that 14 and 15-year-olds would have to remain at their jobs for the time being, although for only four hours daily, the Komsomol proposed on its own that this limited working day be extended to older adolescents. Two months later a group of Komsomols under the leadership of Vladimir Dunayevsky of the Moscow branch began pressing for the formation of special youth sections in the trade unions, to play the role of "an organized, thinking core directing the [trade union] movement along Communist lines." [6]; the party moved quickly to denounce this plan as an effort to pit young workers against their elders and as a "deviation" harmful to the Komsomol organization.

These developments convinced the party of the necessity for tighter controls over the Komsomol. Behind-the-scenes pressure resulted, by August 9, 1919, in a joint edict of the party and Komsomol Central Committees declaring that while the league was "autonomous," meaning self-governing, it was to work "under the control of the party." The Komsomol CC and its various local branches were made "directly subordinate" to corresponding party organs. These moves were formally endorsed at the Second Komsomol Congress, convened in Moscow in early October 1919, and were supplemented by a Congress resolution avowing complete adherence to the program and tactics of the party.

[5] *Ibid.* Both quotations are statements by Lazar Shatskin, one of the leading founders of Komsomol.

[6] Dunayevsky's views are dealt with briefly in *Vtoroi Vserossiskii Sezd RKSM* (Second All-Russian Congress of the RCLY), Moscow-Leningrad, 1926, pp. 37, 180, n. 5.

Meantime the Civil War was on in earnest, and by the time of the Second Congress questions of Komsomol organization or direction were overshadowed by the issue of survival of the entire new order. The Komsomol's major effort in this period was concentrated on mobilizing its members for duty at the front. While thousands of Komsomols served in this capacity; probably many with zeal, there is evidence that recruitments were often effected through pressure and imposed not a little strain on youthful enthusiasm. To cite a single instance, minutes of the Smolensk party committee for May 7, 1920, record a decision to mobilize only the "more active and politically mature" Komsomol members for duty, arresting those who refused and turning them over to the secret police (then Cheka).[7]

Perhaps understandably against this background, party doubts concerning the Komsomol's trustworthiness continued to be manifested on both high and lower levels. In the spring of 1920 Komsomol financing was transferred from state to party organs, as a means of tightening the latter's direct control. At the Ninth Party Congress in March-April, a speaker revealed that Komsomol organs in Arkhangelsk and Siberia had been dissolved, and proposed as an alternative that so-called "Departments for Work among Youth" be established inside the party apparatus. This proposal was attacked by Ryvkin, then chairman of the Komsomol, who successfully argued the advantages of maintaining his organization as a separate entity. A few months later, the party center was even induced to advise its lower-level organs against " a petty guardianship [over Komsomol] which only irritates the conscientious youth."[8]

From Battles to Books

There were, nevertheless, increasing signs that party support for Komsomol was conditioned on its assuming the role of obedient aide, not self-styled political ally. There was still much free-wheeling discussion within Komsomol circles, and some of the more outspoken youths were loud in their demands for greater Komsomol autonomy. An influential group, again headed by the aforementioned Dunayevsky, announced in advance of the Third Komsomol Congress that it would fight for freedom in organizational matters and for the right of

[7] Smolensk Archives, Folder WKP 6, Sheets 47-48. The Archives are a collection of Soviet documents captured by the Germans during World War II and later turned over to American authorities; they are available to researchers at the Army Records Center, Alexandria, Va.

[8] *Sprarochnik Partiinovo Rabotnika* (Handbook of the Party Official), No. 1, Moscow, 1921, pp. 142-43.

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members to discuss all national issues. The party responded by temporarily expelling Dunayevsky from its ranks and by engineering the installation of pliant Komsomol officers at the Congress elections.

The Third Congress was convened in October 1920, with the end of the civil war in sight. Its main event was a speech by Lenin, who offered his view of youth's role in the peace to come. In one of those ironic contradictions in which the history of bolshevism abounds, Lenin—who before the revolution had scoffed at efforts to dissuade youth from political involvement as "hypocritical and obscurantist"—now insisted in effect that politics was not their concern, that their task lay in studying and working. Dodging the issue of how power would be exercised in the new state, Lenin said that because of Russia's ruined economy and suspicious masses, "the real task of creating Communist society" would fall to youth. Toward this end, "the duty of youth in general, and of the Young Communist League and all other organizations in particular, may be summed up in one word: learn." In addition, young people should set an example for the masses by undertaking such prosaic tasks as tending suburban vegetable gardens, supervising communal feeding, doing days of unpaid labor, etc.[9] After the drama of their revolutionary and civil war roles, the Komsomols were taken aback by this message. A later Soviet account recalls that:

Komsomol leaders present at the Congress did not understand Lenin's speech. . . . Just back from civil war glories and deficient in political knowledge . . . [they were] unprepared to comprehend the full significance of the address.[10]

Two months after the Congress, as the last White army sailed for refuge abroad, the party CC issued a directive urging mass infiltration of the Komsomol by Bolsheviks in order to destroy "that 'League patriotism' which is not alien to some workers of the youth movement." [11] Loyalty to Komsomol in and by itself had become taboo: there could, in short, be no loyalty but that to the Communist Party.

The let-down after civil war and the crack-down on the Komsomol inevitably resulted in some disillusionment among those who had fancied themselves as the revolution's *avant-garde,* reflected, among other ways, by young workers' prominent role in factory strikes during the winter of 1920-21. But in the evaluation of Ryvkin (at the Tenth Party Conference in May), the general mood within the Komsomol remained "healthy" until the announcement of the NEP program in the spring. The abandonment of war communism for a mixed private and state capitalism constituted a double blow to young people: for many who had envisioned the immediate advent of Communist society, it was an intellectual defeat; moreover, working adolescents were among the first victims of the large-scale job dismissals brought about by the regime's new efficiency drive. The result was a serious breakdown of morale; as a Soviet account later put it, the main question on young people's lips was "What have we been fighting for?" [12]

The Komsomol under NEP

In this situation, enthusiasm for the Komsomol plummeted, and so did membership. Enrollment, which had climbed to about 480,000 toward the end of the civil war, dropped to 250,000 by the autumn of 1921. Within party councils new proposals were raised for the dissolution of Komsomol; but the leadership, probably fearful of further lowering morale at home and conscious of socialist youth opinion abroad, chose to preserve the restive organization, relying instead on a two-pronged program of still further controls on the one hand, and incentive tactics on the other, to recapture a loyal following. During 1921 and 1922, the party assumed the right of advance examination of Komsomol Congress agendas, tightened its censorship over lists of candidates for league offices, and restricted eligibility for the latter by requirements of party service which thenceforth were to become increasingly rigid.

On the incentive side, a strenuous effort was made from 1922 on to build up the morale of young workers by improving their working conditions, giving them some protection against unemployment (by requiring that a proportion of jobs be reserved for adolescents), and developing a system of factory schools which gave them on-the-job training and at least a taste of education. The Komsomol was given a major role in implementing and supervising this program, with the result that the working youth became increasingly dependent on the organization. Efforts were also made to build up Komsomol strength in the countryside through vigorous recruitment work on the part of activists.

In a further attempt to revive interest, Komsomol leaders promoted a program of activities which aimed at compensating youth's craving for the excitement of the turbulent past. Local groups were urged to encourage the

[9] V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works,* Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1947, Vol. II, p. 661.

[10] A. P. Shokhin, *Kratkaia Istoriia VLKSM* (A Short History of the All-Union Leninist Communist League of Youth), Moscow, 1928, pp. 87-88.

[11] *Spravochnik* . . . , pp. 143-44.

[12] Shokhin, *op. cit.,* p. 103.

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reading of heroic literature, the singing of revolutionary songs, the holding of anti-religious festivals, *etc.* An interesting by-product of this idealization of the revolutionary past was the notorious "sectist" behavior of many Komsomol youth during the 1920's, characterized by rough manners and dress, a special jargon, and an attitude of anti-intellectualism:

Even now a necktie, brooches and bows are regarded as signs of petty-bourgeois individualism. An orderly, hygienic way of life means banishment from the Komsomol. An undisciplined, slovenly appearance, boisterous manners, a "lad in worker's blouse," is considered essential for the "solid" Komsomol member. All this echoes from the old, bygone days of war communism.[13]

Through these promotional efforts and various other pressures brought to bear by the regime, the Komsomol soon regained the membership it had lost, and kept right on growing; enrollment reached 800,000 in 1924, hit the million mark a year later, and doubled again to two million by 1927.[14]

The Impact of Intra-party Struggles

Even as it was achieving this steady expansion, however, Komsomol was racked by new problems arising out of the fierce factional struggles within the Communist Party and Stalin's zigzag maneuvers to achieve total control after Lenin's death. Initially "Trotskyism" had almost no impact on the Komsomol. Trotsky's championing of youth's right to form its own opinions and to "transform them into flesh and blood," as well as his avowed conviction that youth were the party's "surest barometer" and safeguard against bureaucratic degeneration, would seem to have been vastly attractive to Komsomol members. But Trotskyist influence prevailed only among the minority of university youths; the Komsomol leaders united almost to a man behind the party machine to defend NEP, and easily carried with them the league's overwhelming majority of adherents in the factories (who were largely dependent on the Komsomol for jobs and promotions) and in the villages (where Trotsky was loathed for his agrarian views).

When, however, Stalin's alliance with Zinoviev and Kamenev began to show signs of strains in 1925, some Komsomols, including an influential group in Leningrad, threw their support to Zinoviev in his demand for harsher action against Trotsky. In compliance with orders from the Stalinist command, half the members of the Leningrad Province Committee, and 15 members, or over one-fifth of the Komsomol CC were dismissed in March 1925.[15] That June Stalin and his associates warned the editors of the new youth daily, *Komsomolskaia Pravda,* that theirs was ". . . not an organ for discussion, but an organ which is, first and foremost, positive, which gives the readers slogans and viewpoints accepted by the party." [16] Stalin's decisive defeat of the Z-K group at the Fourteenth Party Congress (December 1925) led the Leningrad province organization to declare that it would obey but not approve Congress decisions. As a result, a 23-year-old Stalinist named Alexander Kosarev, who had risen through the ranks of Komsomol and was later to become its head, was sent to Leningrad with plenary powers to reform the organization. A bold Leningrader at the time said of Kosarev and his aides:

They have the mentality [that] if he's not a Stalinist, then put on the screws, let him have it, chase him so far that he won't open his mouth again.[17]

Later in 1926 the Opposition Bloc—now an alliance of Zinoviev and Kamenev with Trotsky—made a strong bid for the support of youth, inspiring the formation of a number of "Trotskyist" protest groups, mainly composed of young intellectuals, in various parts of the country. These groups charged that Komsomol had become a swollen, authoritarian and corrupt bureaucracy, that party control was stifling Komsomol, and that the revolution's edicts protecting adolescent labor had become dead letters. The regime's response was determined and effective. Kosarev was transferred to the important Moscow branch of Komsomol, and subsequently thousands of Trotskyists were expelled and many more intimidated. Komsomol leaders and training groups were exhorted to get down to the business of "ridding members of their frequently-arising mistaken views. . . ." [18]

Attitudes in the Early Plan Era

While the purge left its wounds on the Komsomol, the advent of the First Five-Year Plan acted as an immediate

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[13] A. Slepkov, ed., *Byt i Molodezh* (Mode of Life and the Youth), Moscow 1926, pp. 41-42.

[14] Figures from Shokhin, *op. cit.* p. 115; *Komsomol SSR* (Komsomol of the USSR), Moscow, 1926, p. 13; Balashov and Nelepin, *VLKSM V Tsifrakh,* (ALCLY in Figures), Moscow, 1928, p. 8.

[15] See I. Deutscher, *Stalin, A Political Biography,* Oxford University Press, New York, 1949, pp. 264-65.

[16] I. V. Stalin, *Sochineniia* (Works), Moscow, 1947, Vol. VII, pp. 153-55.

[17] *VII Sezd VLKSM* (Seventh Congress of the ALCLY), Moscow-Leningrad, 1926, p. 108.

[18] *Kommunisticheskoe Prosveshchenie* (Communist Enlightenment), No. 1, 1927, p. 15.

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if temporary restorative. The immense ambition of the plan and its promises for the future initially revived a show of enthusiasm among youth comparable to that of the early revolutionary years, and Stalin's regime expertly marshalled this spirit for service to the state.[19] The Komsomol was invested with substantial responsibility in the implementation of the industrialization program: it helped compile and adapt economic plans, investigate managerial practice, advise for quicker and more efficient output, and—most important—recruit huge numbers of old and new members for work in the factories and on development projects. Komsomols also played a prominent role in the liquidation of the kulaks and institution of the collective farm system. Many youths turned to the tasks at hand with a spirit of fanatical sacrifice.

To be effective for long, however, a promise calling for such huge effort must result in a reassuring measure of fulfillment and reward, and this was not forthcoming. The Komsomol continued to be a prime agent of the regime's program, but during the early 1930's a change of mood became apparent. Komsomol leaders once again began to talk of "ideological deviations" and "bourgeois tendencies" within the organization, to rail against "kulak influence" among the rural membership, to chide worker elements for complaining about urban conditions and starvation. Kosarev, Komsomol Secretary General since 1929, found it necessary to address himself in a major speech of 1932 to the revived theme, "For What Have We Fought?" [20] At the end of that year he ordered a new mass purge, which reduced the newly-inflated membership of 5.3 million to 4.5 million by October 1933.[21] The Kirov assassination of 1934 brought on intensified charges of political dissent and even terrorist moods within Komsomol, and another half million members were expelled in 1935.

New Aims, Means and Membership

These developments, reflecting broader forces of mass discontent throughout the country, led to dynamic changes in the Komsomol program and membership

[19] While the general reaction was highly favorable, some oppositional views of course persisted, as would be only natural in an organization of Komsomol's size. N. Chaplin, Secretary General of Komsomol from 1924-29, was divested of honorary membership in 1930 because of so-called "rightist tendencies." The aforementioned Shatskin also fell into disfavor (both he and Ryvkin later fell victims to the Great Purge). At the grass roots level, many Ukrainian and Turkic youth defected in opposition to the collectivization program.

[20] Reported in *Komsomolskaia Pravda* (Moscow), July 16, 1932.

[21] Figures from *ibid.*, July 17, 1932, and October 29, 1933.

A KOMSOMOL YOUTH

Sign Above: The Examining Judge.
Caption: "Do you know this lad?" "Of course! I accept his Komsomol dues every month."

—From Krokodil (Moscow), November 10, 1956.

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policy, formalized at the 1936 Komsomol Congress.[22] The political indoctrination of youth, neglected in the frenzy of economic activity necessitated by the Five-Year Plan, was once again designated as the cardinal function of Komsomol, reportedly at Stalin's personal instance. The new program abandoned the call for youth's "display of broad initiative" in the "solution of the complex problems of Communist construction," and emphasized instead the need for "Communist education of youth and children," mainly through political study but also through cultural and recreational activities.

At the same time, the rules of admission were changed to deemphasize the importance of "proletarian" origin among candidates and to stress instead the criteria of political reliability and service to the state. Restricted probationary membership (without voting power) was no longer compulsory for non-worker and peasant youth, but only for applicants deemed deficient in political knowledge. Members were to be "advanced and tested youth, people who are devoted to the Soviet government and who are of laborer, peasant and employee [white-collar] origin." While restrictive in the political sense, the new admissions policy thus established a much broader base for membership and paved the way for the later permeation of Komsomol by the offspring of the Stalinist administrative bureaucracy.

The key cogs of the machine which Kosarev had built to cope with economic assignments were ill-equipped to take over as propagandists and organizers of recreation. Probably for this reason rather than for the spurious charges made at the time, Kosarev and his lieutenants—purgers of many in their day—themselves became victims of the Great Purge of 1936-38, carrying thousands of lesser leaders with them. This liquidation of the broad layer of the youth leadership of the Kosarev era, who might otherwise have moved on to higher posts in public life, facilitated the later rise of the above-mentioned sons of the new bureaucracy, whose training and self-interest disposed them toward a placid conformity, toward acceptance without Marxist inhibition of organized social inequality and of Stalin's personal rule.

To the post which Kosarev had vacated came Nikolai Mikhailov, a party journalist over 30 years of age who had never been affiliated with the Komsomol. Under his direction, the new admissions policy was put to use in a vast program of organized recruitment; membership was inflated from 5 million in 1938 to 11 million on the eve of the Soviet-German war.[23] Mikhailov's "new order" decisively stamped out any residual tendencies toward independent thought or action; rank-and-file initiative was discouraged even in minor matters, and increasing reliance placed instead on paid "activists," of which there were over 45,000 by the summer of 1940.[24] In short, Komsomol was shorn of any identity as a body of "chosen" youth and began to assume the form which has since characterized it—that of a mass organization, a means by which a monopolist party could instill conformity and extend political surveillance over the citizenry, and an instrument to pressure youth into types of work or fields of study which the state deemed necessary.

Yet the very recruitment of a mass membership inevitably diluted the "political-mindedness" of Komsomol. Despite—or perhaps because of—the new stress on political indoctrination, official records show that Komsomol study groups, lectures and other activities were in practice unpopular, and poorly attended; certainly ideological faith was anything but strong at the time the war broke out.

Komsomol Tasks in World War II

The pattern of Soviet popular reaction to the German surprise invasion of June 1941 is too well known to require dealing with here. Much evidence has been offered to suggest that the initial mass civilian surrenders to the Germans were in large part occasioned by popular dissatisfaction with the Stalin regime, and that indignation over Nazi brutality, rather than loyalty to Soviet socialism, led to the later upsurge of patriotism and determined resistance of the populace. Throughout the war, in any event, the regime directed its appeals to the nationalist as distinct from the political sentiment of the people, youth included.

Komsomol played a many-sided role in the war effort. Early in the invasion, it was an important although indirect factor in the development of the guerilla warfare movement, since acts of terror committed by Komsomol underground units were one cause of the terrible Nazi reprisals which in turn led many civilians to take up arms. In the rear, the Komsomol's main task was to help mobilize, instruct and spur the effort of working youth in the enormous task of wartime production. Recruitment continued on a large scale both among civilian youth and in the armed services, where Komsomol acted as an auxiliary agent to sustain young soldiers' morale and sense of duty.

While Bolshevik ideological propaganda was curtailed, the Komsomol tried to maintain some sense of discipline

[22] Information on the Congress is from *Desiatyi Sezd VLKSM* (Tenth Congress of the ALCLY), Moscow, 1936, 2 Vols.

[23] Figures from *Bolshevik* (Moscow), No. 21-22, 1938, p. 38; *Komsomolskaia Pravda,* March 14, 1939, and February 7, 1943.

[24] Reported in *Molodoi Bolshevik* (Moscow), No. 14, 1940, p. 10.

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over youth's thinking and behavior during the war. Komsomol activists were attached to the guerilla bands for this purpose, though reportedly without too much success.[25] As the tide of war turned and the Red Army moved westward, the Komsomol was never far behind. Under the leadership of officials from the east and discharged military personnel, new Komsomol units were formed to ferret out collaborationists and to resume indoctrination activities in an effort to reestablish political authority. To help train leaders for this effort, a Central Komsomol School was established with 940 hours of instruction in the social sciences, and annual part-time courses of 196 hours were set up in the major towns.

IN THE POSTWAR PERIOD from 1945 until the death of Stalin— and for that matter, with variations ever since—the Komsomol authorities turned with new concentration to the twin aims set forth in the late 1930's: that is, the building of a mass organization (through relaxed membership requirements) for the purposes of mass indoctrination (through intensified political education). Initially, the first of these aims met with defeat, due in no small measure to the drab program of political studies inspired by the second. Large numbers of ex-servicemen failed to register with civilian Komsomol organizations, and the ranks were further depleted by automatic expulsions for non-payment of dues, non-attendance at meetings and lectures, *etc.* As a result, membership dropped precipitously from a wartime high of 15 million, remaining at a level between eight and nine million through 1948. The characteristic consequence was a new all-out recruitment drive from 1949 onward, which turned the tide through a combination of pressure, persuasion, and a further lowering of eligibility requirements; enrollment was back at 13 million by 1951 and was to rise well above the 18 million level in later years.[26]

Within the Komsomol, however, the situation remained far from healthy. The relentless stress on political indoctrination, served up in large and always uninspiring doses, led once more to widespread apathy and indifference toward Komsomol among the youth. Membership became so inconsequential a distinction that few members, according to report, bothered to wear the organizational badge. These attitudes in turn caused resentment among the more zealous youth toward the indiscriminate admissions policy.

At the same time, the Stalinist cancer of bureaucratism spread through the permanent Komsomol hierarchy. Leadership at every level was increasingly taken over by party-designated functionaries whose interests had little in common with those of the youth whom they directed. Epitomizing these was Mikhailov's successor, Alexander Shelepin, a prewar university graduate who must have been at least 35 years of age when appointed Komsomol First Secretary in October 1952. Shelepin's chief cohorts were similar "youth" with higher diplomas and with roots in the state bureaucracy.

Post-Stalinist Reform and Reaction

The death of Stalin and the advent of the post-Stalin era had its impact on Komsomol as on all other elements of Soviet life; but as succeeding years have shown, the alternating winds between thaw and reaction have produced no change in the essential nature or aims of the organization.

In the initial period of relative relaxation from Stalinist controls, some attempts were made, both from above and from below, to restimulate interest in Komsomol and to bolster its prestige through various reforms. Primary organizations were promised fewer paid activists and more youthful leaders. Checks on attendance at political indoctrination sessions were relaxed. Directives from the center urged fewer dry speeches at Komsomol meetings and more opportunities for members to discuss their personal work and problems. To reduce tedium, a time limit was also set on the length of meetings.

At the same time, some appeals were voiced from below for greater "Komsomol democracy"—that is, for the return to certain "democratic" procedures on the rule books, long ignored or bypassed by officials. There were also signs of dissatisfaction with the tight control over Komsomol "elective" offices. Only a month after Stalin's death, for example, a substantial—though unsuccessful—protest vote was registered against the reelection of the First Secretary of the Komsomol organization in the Kazakhstan republic, providing an indication of at least some immediate reaction against the Stalinist demand for obedience to "recommendations" from on high.[27] Available evidence indicates that in subsequent months, similar protests were raised against "suggested" nominees in a number of Komsomol units in various part of the country. In this matter, however, the Komsomol center stood rigid: orders went out that while the rank-and-file should

[25] *Komsomolskii Rabotnik* (Moscow), No. 11-12, 1945, published the complaint of one such leader: "My lads are fearless, unafraid of bullets. For this I praise them, but I swear at them for their discipline—they've lost all sense of it."

[26] Figures from *Bolshaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia* (Large Soviet Encyclopedia), Moscow, 1951, Vol. IX, p. 330; and *Pravda,* February 22, 1956.

[27] *Komsomolskaia Pravda,* June 9, 1954.

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be sounded out before elections, final "counsel" from above was to be heeded. An analysis of press reports indicates that in practice electoral controls were generally maintained.

The Twelfth Komsomol Congress, convened in March 1954, made clear that the authorities were contemplating no further reforms or changes in the Komsomol. The great majority of the delegates were party-appointed or paid functionaries rather than genuine representatives of the youth membership (almost two-thirds were over the maximum age limit of Komsomol enrollment). The essential message of Congress oratory was an exhortation to youth to pay more attention to work and studies, reminiscent of Lenin's aforementioned injunction of 1920 against youthful "politicking" and Stalin's demand in the 1930's for "less babble, more work." In line with this theme, a "vote" of the Congress reduced the frequency with which Komsomol elections and conventions were to be held. In this atmosphere, Komsomol inevitably continued to be characterized by "boredom, grayness and stagnation," as *Komsomolskaia Pravda* complained some months later.[28]

The Second Cycle

The new shift of winds at the historic Twentieth CPSU Congress in February 1956 led to an airing of the situation in Komsomol and bitter criticism on the part of party officials, particularly with regard to the conduct of political studies. USSR President Klementi Voroshilov, for example, complained:

The character training work of the Komsomol in schools, factories and offices at present is often formal in nature; [it] amounts to general talks about communism, and the arranging of speeches which are hackneyed and far from the problems of daily life.[29]

Shelepin, called on the carpet, acknowledged the failures of Komsomol's indoctrination efforts:

We concern ourselves basically with cud, repetition year in and year out of one and the same proposition which, naturally enough, cannot satisfy the youth. As a result . . . some of the members are breaking away from the Komsomol, are departing from its influence.[30]

Nobody at the Congress offered any suggestions as to how political indoctrination *could* be made more interesting, but Shelepin at least pledged fresh efforts to increase Komsomol's popularity, chiefly through the sponsorship of recreation.

The general ferment which followed in the wake of the Congress produced a sharp though short-lived change in the Komsomol atmosphere. In organizational elections held during the fall of 1956, the officially-approved nominations were challenged by the rank-and-file in many units, and discussion became so outspoken at some meetings that calls-to-order were necessary. This was particularly true of Komsomol units at the universities where, according to press reports, the electoral campaign was "unprecedented" in its "democratization." [31]

The extent to which stirrings of independent spirit had "infected" youth (as well as other elements of the population) became alarmingly apparent to the regime with the eruption of open protest, particularly among student groups, after the brutal Soviet intervention in the Hungarian uprising. The perhaps inevitable and well-known consequence has been the regime's reversion to a neo-Stalinist domestic policy, marked by a strong reassertion of party infallibility and authority, and accompanied by a stern crack-down on restive elements.

This is the mood that prevails today in the Soviet Union. For Komsomol it has meant a return to the stifling regimen that has characterized most of its post-war existence. Once again the only voice to be heard is that of the party, issuing through its trusted mouthpieces in the Komsomol hierarchy—the "uncles wisened by life" to whose "prudence" the organization has been entrusted, as one Soviet writer dared to comment of the Komsomol secretaries a few years ago. And once again the sum and total of their message—as propounded at the most recent Komsomol Congress in April 1958—is a reiteration of the fossilized themes: more work, more study, more indoctrination and, of course, more supervision by the party.

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THE FORTY YEARS of Komsomol history reviewed above underscore one unassailable fact: the failure of communism's youth organization to evoke the enthusiasm and interest of the large majority of Soviet young people. Members they may be, but many with the attitude that Komsomol is simply one more organizational necessity in a totally organized state. The reasons for this indifference should be clear—the leadership's persistent squelching of any individualism or healthy factionalism within the organization, its discouragement of initiative even in pursuit of regime aims, its relentless stress on political studies, and on a broader scale, the failure of the regime's early and roseate promises to materialize.

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[28] *Ibid.*, September 2, 1955.

[29] K. E. Voroshilov, *Rech na XX Sezde KPSS* (Speech at the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU), Moscow, 1956, p. 21.

[30] Shelepin's speech reported in *Pravda*, February 22, 1956.

[31] *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, December 15, 1956.

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These factors have produced such a state of moribundity in Komsomol as to raise the issue whether there is any point in its existence: some Soviet youths with whom the present writer talked on a recent trip to the USSR answered this question with an emphatic negative. Considering the regime's point of view, it might be argued that the expansion of the school system has provided an alternative—and in many ways more efficient—medium for the political indoctrination of youth.

Yet the regime is compelled by the logic of its own rule to perpetuate Komsomol in its present role and form. Partly—and ironically—because of Komsomol's failures in the past, youth "conscientiousness" is not what the regime wants it to be. The bulk of youth is passively loyal but not devoted, admiring of Soviet material achievement yet not disposed to the further sacrifices demanded by the state. Among a minority, dissatisfaction is reflected in nascent political unrest or in juvenile delinquency and hooliganism. The party has no choice but to continue trying to combat these attitudes through a predominantly coercive Komsomol. The only alternatives would be a liberalized, genuine youth organization, which might rally general support and enthusiasm but by the same token would be considered a potential threat to party authority—or no organization at all, which would put youth activities outside the pale of direct party control and make disaffection that much harder to hold in check. Neither of these alternatives is conceivable in the Soviet totalitarian state. It seems safe to conclude that Komsomol will go right on being what it has been for most of its history—an organization not of youth, but of, by and for the Communist Party.

Afflictions of the Youth League

By Allen Kassof

THIS OCTOBER the Komsomol—Soviet Russia's League of Communist Youth—will celebrate its fortieth anniversary. Orators will speak of heroic achievements, newspapers will proclaim the Komsomol's solidarity with the party, and perhaps another Order of Lenin may be awarded the Komsomol in honor of the occasion. The world's largest youth organization will enter its fifth decade with all the official fanfare and synthetic enthusiasm of Soviet public ceremonies. Yet as the festivities draw near, some thoughtful officials and many rank-and-file members may justifiably ask themselves whether there is really anything to celebrate.

To outward appearances the Komsomol is indeed a powerful and influential organization. Together with its junior counterpart—the Pioneers—the Komsomol touches the lives of virtually all young citizens. Its eighteen million members, with an approximately equal number of Pioneers, constitute almost one-fifth of the entire population, and the time is not far off when the overwhelming majority of all Soviet citizens will be either active members or graduates of the official youth program. The network of Komsomol cells in schools, universities, factories, farms, and military units is so vast and pervasive that even non-members find it difficult to escape from contact and influence. Moreover, the Komsomol and Pioneers enjoy an absolute, party sanctioned monopoly over organized youth activities and operate without problems of competition from rival groups.

Like the results of one-party elections in the Soviet Union, the success of the Komsomol would thus seem to be inevitable. In fact, however, this is far from the case. Measured against its apparent potential, the Komsomol's actual performance is unimpressive. As official guardian of youthful orthodoxy and conformity it has not effectively carried out its tasks, as indicated by the ample and dramatic evidence in recent times of restiveness and

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discontent among the new generations of Soviet youth.[1] Current attempts by the Komsomol to counteract the discontent and to reinforce its hold over the loyalties and aspirations of the young seem to be meeting with little positive response.

The reasons for this reaction and the particular problems which confront the Komsomol in its appeal can perhaps be understood by examining the role which it has been assigned in the Soviet system.

Party Fist in the Komsomol Glove

The observer of Komsomol affairs soon becomes aware of a glaring contradiction: in spite of its formidable title (in full, the All-Union Leninist Communist League of Youth), the Komsomol is a youth organization in name only. No riddle is intended here. To be sure the Komsomol has flesh-and-blood young members. Its program however, is formulated not by the membership but by the Soviet regime in the interests of the ruling group, and the real interests of youth play an astonishingly small part in its activities. Just as there can be no real labor unions in the USSR, where the state is simultaneously employer and union, so too the very idea of a bona fide youth organization is intolerable to the regime. Fundamentally, the Komsomol is not a youth organization nearly so much as it is a means of preventing Soviet youth from organizing on its own, and of forestalling the explosive issues which might arise if youth could speak with its own voice and act on its own behalf.

Indeed, the entire history of the Komsomol can be seen as a continuing series of attempts to control new Soviet generations by depriving them of any legitimate and independent channels through which to express and act upon their special aspirations or grievances, while at the same time creating the appearance of enthusiastic support for the system and its leaders. The aim of bringing the Komsomol under the absolute domination of the party was long ago realized, and in that process the Komsomol was necessarily emasculated.

What is so apparent in historical perspective is today truer than ever. The Thirteenth Congress of the Komsomol, meeting in Moscow in April of this year, once again demonstrated the facts of Komsomol life. Of the 1,236 delegates representing "Soviet youth", 59 percent were members or candidates of the Communuist Party. More striking, 52 percent of the delegates were older than 26 years—until the Congress, the normal statutory age limit for membership in the Komsomol (it is now 27). Some 14 percent were over 30 years of age. The largest single category of delegates did not represent the masses of youth—that is, young workers, students, or collective farmers—but rather consisted of full-time, professional Komsomol bureaucrats.[2]

In speeches at the Congress, frequent declarations were made asserting the independence and freedom which Soviet youth enjoys through the Komsomol. Yet the above statistics speak for themselves—and however unrepresentative the Congress, it in turn is little more than a ceremonial rubber-stamp body for the Komsomol Central Committee, which in turn is under the direct control of the party Central Committee.

Safety in Numbers

Membership policy is another reflection of the regime's firm refusal to allow the development of a youth organization which might possess independent power. The apparent tactic is to inflate membership rolls to such a huge extent that belonging to the Komsomol *per se* carries no special status or privileges. In its earlier history the Komsomol consisted of a youthful elite for whom membership was a stepping-stone to the party. The inference here is not that the Komsomol was necessarily popular (as the party's henchman in forced collectivization and other extreme measures it could hardly be expected to have won the people's sympathy); however, belonging to it was in some respects a distinction. With the advent of mass membership, already in evidence before the war, the *esprit de corps* of the elite came to be replaced by the apathy of the many.

This process of open deterioration recently prompted some members to urge a return to more restrictive membership practices. One disillusioned youth wrote:

When a platoon wins a victory, the commander gives awards after the battle. To whom does he give them? To everyone? No. Only to those who have distinguished themselves, who have done something extraordinary to bring about the victory. We have a great many boys and girls, but only the best of them, only the heroes, should be in the Komsomol.[3]

The official reaction was swift and vitriolic. Such proposals were branded as the work of "extremists" trying to undermine the progressive goal of ever-more inclusive membership.[4] The sharpness of the response may well have been the product of fears that an elite youth group composed of "heroes" would ultimately claim rights to

[1] Cf. S. V. and P. Utechin, "Patterns of Nonconformity"; and Allen Kassof, "Youth versus the Regime: Conflict in Values," *Problems of Communism*, Vol. VI, No. 3 (May-June), 1957.

[2] Statistics calculated from information appearing in *Komsomolskaia Pravda* (Moscow), April 15, 1958, p. 2.

[3] *Ibid.*, March 20, 1957, p. 2.

[4] *Ibid.*

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match its status. Mass membership is diluted membership.

The consequences of the regime's fearful attitude are illustrated by an event which took place in Tashkent, in 1956.[5] A group of Komsomol members, bored with the empty routine of their cell, agreed to band together in more interesting and fruitful activities. They decided to perform good deeds in the community: run errands for the ill, assist the aged, fight against juvenile delinquency and hooliganism. In all respects they lived up to the model of the ideal Komsomol member—except that they were acting on their own initiative. News of their activities soon reached the desks of local authorities. Far from being praised for their meritorious behavior, the youngsters were assumed to be members of a politically deviant underground ring. They were questioned accordingly by the procurator's (prosecutor's) office, but released when the suspicions proved to be ludicrous. Informed of the case, national Komsomol officials reacted in anger. But their wrath was directed not so much at the Tashkent authorities for their comic opera behavior, as at the local Komsomol leaders for their lack of vigilance in allowing members to initiate independent—even though harmless —activities.

That the Komsomol is a counterfeit youth organization is not a novel conclusion; the random evidence presented above can be multiplied many times over simply by a cursory examination of Soviet sources. The importance of realizing this fact in the present analysis is that it provides the essential perspective from which to view the Komsomol's problems.

Boredom by Dictum

The effectiveness of the Komsomol ultimately must be measured by its impact on individual members. To judge from the tone and content of the Komsomol press, the reaction of members is all too frequently one of utter boredom and apathy. In one of the frankest discussions of youth attitudes to come from the Soviet Union in recent years, a writer observes:

> **Boredom is the first culprit! What could be more stifling to the social life of young people than boredom? Indeed, we have seen some educators, propagandists and leaders, in their discussions with you, ruling out all sounds except fervor made-to-order, the roars of a boss and the lulling mumble of the Talmudist. You go to a meeting in the young worker's club and there, covered by the speaker's stand up to his head and shoulders, as if he were wearing an apron, his nose to his paper, the speaker is mumbling away. . . . All knew in advance that they would have to be bored at the opening of the meeting; nothing to be done about it—it's the custom. They have become habituated to regarding as "boring talk" the most precious and sacred ideas, the things for which we live on this earth. The natural and serious interest of youth in political life has been knocked out of them by formal rhetoric and boredom.[6]**

The same sentiments have been expressed in terser fashion by Komsomol members. One former adherent recalls his experience in the following words:

> **It bored me. The activities were monotonous. You always heard the same words. Attending a meeting of the Komsomol was like sitting in a room in which a fly was constantly buzzing on the wall for two hours.[7]**

Since rank-and-file members have practically no voice in Komsomol affairs, except for rigidly defined self-criticism, it is no wonder that they lack an active interest. Two members of the Komsomol Central Committee, who can hardly be accused of a negative bias, describe this situation in Komsomol cells:

> **Actually, what interest is there in an organization where everything is done for the members, who assume the role of observers and executors of tasks [which are assigned to them]? It is not unusual to have a situation in which the secretary of the [local] Komsomol organization, setting out upon some important matter, gives out assignments and checks up [on their fulfillment] by himself, instead of giving members an opportunity to clarify the meaning and significance of the task. In other words, he replaces the group with himself. Under such circumstances, the life of the group dies away.**

The same officials reveal the plight of the average member. He has no opportunity to express his views and interests in the face of the *apparat's* steamroller power:

> **Among the delegates to [Komsomol] conferences, workers and collective farmers are so few in number that they are simply embarrassed in the presence of the overwhelming mass of [professional] Komsomol workers who know all the order and rituals, all the ins and outs of the Komsomol, who speak well and employ "quotations". . . . It is no accident that in many of the speeches the most important questions which concern worker and peasant youth remain in the background, while more discussion is devoted to narrow committee questions. . . .[8]**

Even though the Komsomol Central Committee thus shows its awareness of the problem, there is no intention

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[5] *Ibid.*, No. 10, 1956, p. 2.

[6] *Literaturnaia Gazeta* (Moscow), May 25, 1957, p. 2. Translation from *Current Digest of the Soviet Press* (New York), Vol. IX, No. 7, pp. 12-14.

[7] From an interview in the files of the Project on the Soviet Social System, Russian Research Center, Harvard University.

[8] V. Zaichikov and N. Mesiatsev, "O Samodeiatelnosti i Initsiativa Komsomolskikh Organizatsii (Concerning the Independence and Initiative of Komsomol Organizations), *Molodoi Kommunist* (Moscow), No. 6, 1956.

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of improving the situation by removing the barriers to free speech for the general membership. Such action is barred by an overriding consideration:

Of course, it would be dangerous to convert the Komsomol into a kind of discussion club where people argue and discuss endlessly. After . . . a resolution is adopted, all the members of the organization act as one man.[9]

Here is an apt instance of Soviet democratic centralism, in which the centralism has swallowed the democracy.

The "Divorce from Life"

The fact that the Komsomol is controlled from above, rather than reflecting grass-roots interests, contributes in other ways to the atmosphere of boredom. Local concerns and problems, unless by chance they are momentarily related to national policy decisions, tend to receive short shrift. Daily problems and personal cares of young people give way to stereotyped lectures on political topics, harangues to do "more and better" in school or on the job, or fanciful accounts of how perfect Soviet life is. Even when lecturers do turn their attention specifically to the affairs of youth, they are inclined to draw their materials, not from surrounding life, but from reports and editorials in the central press.[10] This puts them on safe ground so far as the "correctness" of their approach is concerned, but leaves much to be desired from the point of view of the audience. The result, to use Soviet terminology, is that the Komsomol is "divorced from life." [11] It is likely to remain so, for the idea that "some simple people should have a chance to make a speech once in a while" goes unheeded.[12]

This "divorce from life" is aggravated by the Komsomol's practice of asking its members, decades after the event, to fight the revolution all over again. As one report puts it, "an inappropriately great amount of time is spent studying the prerevolutionary period and little on the study of contemporary problems." [13] Here again there may be greater safety in dealing with issues long since decided—but it is no surprise that slogans repeated to the point of meaninglessness should fail to excite youthful interest. *Komsomolskaia Pravda* laments:

"What's happened to youth?", you hear nowadays. Why are there so many indifferent people in the Komsomol? . . . The youth of the generation born from 1931-1942—how do we live? . . . It is impossible not to agree that in the lives of Komsomol members of the older generation there was more fervor, more of a Komsomol spark.[14]

This concern is echoed in a report from the Komsomol Central Committee:

. . . It should not be forgotten that the present generation of youth has not gone through the hard school of revolutionary struggle, . . . has not experienced those deprivations and difficulties which fell to the older generation. . . . It is no accident that part of our youth poorly conceives at what price . . . the conditions under which it now lives were won, . . . and at times fails to appreciate the great achievements of the Soviet people.[15]

One can agree that the passage of time makes it difficult for the Komsomol to inspire a high level of enthusiasm for past history. Still, it complicates its task by the ineptness of its own indoctrination program. While on one level it tells its members to be revolutionaries and patriots, on another it treats them as incompetent juveniles who are not to be trusted with serious matters. Recently a member wrote:

I have been in the Komsomol for six years. I have carried out all of my Komsomol assignments, but frequently they have not satisfied me because of their insignificance. What needs to be done?—get tickets to the movies or theatre; write a piece for the wall newspaper twice a year; call on a sick comrade. These have been my usual tasks during the year. And some members don't even do this. This is why a *Komsomolets* forgets his calling.

Another member asks:

Aren't there bigger assignments than the preparation of lectures, reports and so forth?

A third demands:

The Komsomol should be entrusted with some major, serious matter—not just making posters, organizing excursions and collecting scrap metal. The Komsomol should be entrusted with its rightful place in production and in social-political life.[16]

The Komsomol's Economic Task

In fact the Komsomol *is* concerned with more than one "major, serious matter," although it is doubtful whether all members regard them as "rightful." In addition to its role in indoctrination, already touched upon, the Komsomol serves the party in various ways as an instrument of pressure and coercion.

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[9] *Ibid.*

[10] This fact is the subject of complaint in *Sovetskaia Moldavia* (Kishinev), No. 285, 1956, p. 2.

[11] See *Voprosy Komsomolskoi Raboty* (Problems of Komsomol Work), Moscow, 1956, p. 12.

[12] Zaichikov and Mesiatsev, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

[13] *Voprosy Komsomolskoi Raboty*, p. 12.

[14] *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, February 23, 1957, p. 3.

[15] *Ibid.*, February 28, 1957.

[16] All these statements quoted in *ibid.*, March 21, 1957.

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In industrial enterprises and on collective farms, the Komsomol helps to intensify the well-known "tempo" of Soviet life—the relentless drive to fulfill and overfulfill through hard and unremitting labor. *Komsomolskaia Pravda* spills over with such exhortations and slogans as, "What have you done for the increase of labor productivity?"; "Build much—build economically!"; "Young cattle raisers—compete!".[17] Young workers are urged to step up their pace, to compete with one another in raising work standards and norms; factory is pitted against factory and farm against farm in "socialist competition." For those who lag behind, the opinions of their peers are "spontaneously" mobilized to shame them; in wall newspapers, on bulletin boards, the backward and recalcitrant are cajoled and criticized. While the youth press is daily filled with reports of so-called voluntary increases in work quotas and promises by Komsomol units to deliver goods ahead of schedule, rarely is there any suggestion that the Komsomol is doing anything important to protect the interests of youthful workers before management, to see that their special needs are cared for, or to assure them of improved working conditions. On the contrary, members are expected to be grateful for the privilege of contributing their efforts, and to be thankful to the party and the Komsomol for pointing out the superior morality of unremitting labor under whatever conditions of hardship. This, at least, is the preachment to the rank-and-file, if not always the practice of the teachers; as one report complains: "Many [Komsomol] agitators go where it is easier; while in some youth [workers'] dormitory where it is cold . . . where the stove doesn't work, they stay away." [18]

This seeming indifference to youth's welfare does not mean that the Komsomol is not in principle concerned with the personal lives of Soviet young people. Indeed, it assumes the right to investigate and to make decisions involving the private behavior and morals of individuals. In the Soviet Union, where the institutionalized invasion of privacy has gone to greater extremes than in any other contemporary society, additional interference from the Komsomol is particularly unwelcome. A young woman from Yakutsk, a member of the Komsomol Committee, cautiously voices her distaste:

> Today in the Komsomol Committee . . . the case of two members—man and wife—was taken up. Having met another girl, the husband told his wife than he would no longer live with her. She suffered much, and even became ill. . . . Surely there are some things in family life which are not discussed before strangers; therefore, it is extremely difficult even for

[17] *Ibid.*, January 19, 1958, p. 1; January 15, 1958, p. 1; and December 14, 1957, p. 1.

[18] *Voprosy Komsomolskoi Raboty*, p. 13.

Рисунок Е. ГУРОВА.

— ...А еще, батюшка, комсомольское собрание я пропустила и взносы у меня за два месяца не уплачены...

CONFESSION

—And also, Father, I missed a Komsomol meeting and I haven't paid my dues for two months . . .

—From Krokodil (Moscow), February 10, 1958.

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comrades to analyze and to decide who is right, who is guilty. In my opinion, no societal organizations can help in a case of unhappy love. And if they don't help, then why discuss [the problem]? I expressed this thought at a session of the Committee. Many disagreed with me, and they even said that I don't think in a proper Komsomol way. Is my opinion correct?[19]

This letter was printed as part of an editorial in *Komsomolskaia Pravda* entitled, "Is it Necessary to Interfere in Private Life?" The answer was emphatically yes.

The Komsomol as "Hiring-Boss"

Still another function of the Komsomol is to act as the party's aide in the execution of unpopular tasks, mainly by operating as an agency of labor recruitment. The enormous scope of this phase of its program was indicated in a recent speech by Khrushchev, who reported that the Komsomol had sent 300,000 youths to work under rugged conditions in Siberia, the Far East, Kazakhstan, and the North, while 350,000 were recruited for agricultural development work in the virgin and idle lands.[20] Probably some of these actually volunteered, but the propaganda picture of armies of youth joyously signing up is contradicted by the regime's renewed exhortations to the Komsomol to round up more manpower.[21]

If some Komsomol measures are distasteful to its own members, others of its activities tend as strongly to alienate the adult population. The heyday of the young hero-Komsomolite, who does his duty by reporting his parents for real or imagined political crimes, has passed with the relative stabilization of family life. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that Pavlik Morozov, the boy who won fame as an informer in the 1930's, is still celebrated in children's books.

In less dramatic ways, the Komsomol continues to harass older citizens. An example is in the operation of the Komsomol "light cavalry". These units conduct unannounced "raids" on economic enterprises, searching for signs of managerial inefficiency.[22] If damaging evidence is uncovered the manager is pressed to effect corrective measures or to face the consequences of being reported to higher authorities or having his case aired in the press. Readers who are familiar with the complex cross-pressures and strains under which the Soviet manager routinely works will appreciate that the interference of the Komsomol is one more headache causing understandable hostility among the victims.

A Summary of Assets and Failures

It is evident from the foregoing account that the Komsomol is simply one more of the many institutions through which the Soviet rulers seek to exert totalitarian controls over the populace. The one feature which distinguishes it from other agencies of coercion is its concentrated focus on the younger generations subject to its grip. Given its role in the system, the Komsomol is no more likely to be greeted with enthusiasm than are its adult counterparts. So long as the regime maintains a basic mistrust of its citizenry, the Komsomol will continue to function in this negative capacity.

Does this mean that the Komsomol is a total failure, or even a liability to the regime? Not necessarily. Popularity and acceptance have never been the criteria of action for the Soviet leadership. If the Komsomol does nothing more than block the open organization of dissidents among Soviet youth—and it does do this quite effectively—then it must be counted as an asset to Soviet power. The question of how acceptable or repugnant the Komsomol is to the Soviet youth in no way affects the virtual certainty of its existence so long as it is backed by the full power and authority of the party.

Yet the Komsomol has its serious debits. External restraints are not an altogether satisfactory substitute for the cultivation of positive loyalty. Because such restraints mask deviant attitudes by forcing them to assume covert forms, potentially disruptive forces can be at work behind the comforting mirage that all is under control. In the absence of legal outlets, some young citizens turn to alternative means of protest.

The most widespread and therefore most dangerous factor with which the regime must cope is the posture of apathy and passivity among youth—the refusal to abide by official norms which demand intense, total, activist loyalty and involvement in the system. It begins with a reluctance to join the Komsomol at all:

. . . Does youth willingly join all Komsomol organizations? Unfortunately, no. Over many months, and sometimes even for years, . . . many Komsomol organizations fail to grow.[23]

This resistance forces the Komsomol to employ extraordinary measures to assure a "mass" membership—

[19] *Komsomolskaia Pravda,* January 4, 1958, p. 4.

[20] Quoted in *ibid.,* April 19, 1958.

[21] See *Pravda,* May 19, 1956, p. 1.

[22] A typical raid is described in *Komsomolskaia Pravda,* May 21, 1958, p. 1.

[23] "O chem Govoriat Tsifry Rosta VLKSM" (The Meaning of the Statistics of Growth of the VLKSM), *Molodoi Kommunist,* No. 6, 1956, p. 54.

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such as the virtual elimination of all eligibility qualifications and the automatic enrollment of entire groups as they come of age.[24]

The presence in the Komsomol of individuals who never wanted to join in the first place can only add to the already considerable sources of dissatisfaction within the organization. Members can simply refuse to give themselves to the organization:

> Our youth loves to discuss; but they don't discuss in the Komsomol, they do it elsewhere. Why can't the Komsomol be made interesting enough so that people will do their discussing there?[25]

More active forms of protest have recently come to light in an extraordinary essay in *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, in which alarm is expressed over the appearance of "nihilistic" tendencies in the new generation.[26] Known colloquially as the *nibonicho* (from a contraction of the Russian words meaning "neither God nor the Devil"), these "nihilists" are described in the essay by verse:

> "If the world whistles and spins like a top,
> What's that to us?"—Everything on earth
> Seems nothing to these characters
> Because they are ***nibonicho.***
>
> South or north, east or west,
> In ice or boiling water,
> He is neither cold nor hot,
> Because he is ***nibonicho.***

The essay depicts them further as being:

> . . . arrogant hooters and skeptics with their contemptuously protruding lips, whose every action emphasizes that nothing in life is sacred . . . , who put on a long face when those around them are having fun and jeer when others are moved.

Finally and revealingly, their attitude toward the Komsomol is decried:

> Imagine yourself at a school debate, let us say, where the Komsomol members are discussing the meaning of happiness. Boys and girls are on the platform, excited, talking as best they can, arguing with one another. From a far, dim corner of the room a remark is thrown out now and then as a comment on the excited and sincere words of the debater:
> "Did you get that? Patriotis-sm!" It is pronounced this way on purpose—"Patriotis-sm."
> Suddenly someone concealed behind the others' backs utters: "Stormy ovation, all rise!"
> This is the local ***nibonicho*** company at work.

Whether the *nibonichos* are really "nihilists", or whether they are serious youths giving vent to their frustrations through sophisticated irony, the reader will decide for himself. In any case, they are products of the system in which they live.

Where do they come from? Even the Soviets are forced to admit that the Komsomol shares the blame:

> Sometimes the noisy rumble of prepared texts of speeches at some Komsomol meeting has drowned out the worried voices of young consciences. At times a deadening formalism has made the carrying out of important propaganda assignments meaningless: It was important to place checkmarks in a column of assignments, "Done". . . .
> It is also true that an unthinking attitude toward life has been instilled by the parade-dress books, painting and films, abounding in a showy prettiness that concealed many flaws of life. . . .[27]

Meanwhile, as preparations take place for the fortieth anniversary, the "worried voices of young consciences" will continue to "do their discussing elsewhere". Therein lies the essence of the Komsomol's failure.

[24] *Ibid.*, pp. 53-56.
[25] *Voprosy Komsomolskoi Raboty*, p. 13
[26] *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, loc. cit.
[27] *Ibid.*

Youth and Capitalist "Survivals"

A LOAFER'S FAILURE

—What rotten luck! I signed up for work in the fields, and now they tell me that they won't have movies and dancing tonight . . .

—From Krokodil (Moscow), July 20, 1957.

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Communism and Nationalism in Latin America

By Victor Alba

EDITORS' NOTE: The article below is the third of a series initiated in the last issue of this journal, on Communist and Soviet activities in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Mr. Alba examines the Communist exploitation and encouragement of a clearly reactionary trend in Latin American culture; as the author points out, the affinity between "negative nationalism" and Soviet communism, while conspicuous in the countries of Latin America, is also present in other countries exhibiting an anti-colonial and anti-Western animus. Future issues will carry articles on Communist activities in Indonesia and the Middle East.

HAND IN HAND with the expansion of Communist power in the postwar world, there has come into being a voluminous body of literature analyzing Communist methods of political penetration. The relatively few among these studies which deal with Communist action in Latin America have tended to emphasize the party's tactics of wooing support among key segments of the population by means of flattery and promises of material benefit, reinforced on occasion by threats or by what might be termed political "blackmail"—in brief, by the familiar Communist technique of the carrot and the stick.[1]

What has, however, been generally neglected so far is the broader ideological context within which the Latin American Communists have cast their campaigns and through which they have achieved a measure of success. As in the recent past in Asia, and to a certain extent also in Eastern Europe, communism in Latin America has not operated under the aegis of the traditional slogans of class struggle and proletarian revolution. Aware of the lack of solid Marxist tradition among the Latin American population, the Communists decided to conduct their propaganda in a more comprehensible political idiom; they developed what for Latin America was a new concept of nationalism and then proceeded to exploit it for their own political purposes. It would be meaningless to discuss Communist policies in Latin America without an analysis of this new type of nationalism. And in order to explain its genesis, we must first turn to a consideration of traditional Latin American nationalism.

Mr. Alba, a Spanish journalist and scholar, has lived for many years in Latin America. His published works include Le mouvement ouvrière en Amerique latine *(Paris: Les Editions Ouvrières), 1953, and* Historia del communismo en America Latina *(Ediciones Occidentales, Mexico), 1954.*

The Era of Positive Nationalism

The boundaries of the twenty countries that form Latin America correspond roughly to the administrative divisions of the Spanish colonial period. Almost all these countries originally obtained their independence not from Spain but from the Spanish crown which had been usurped by one of Napoleon's brothers. Thus the

[1] With respect to Latin America, the most interesting works on this subject are: Daniel James, *Red Design for the Americas—Guatemalan Prelude,* New York, 1954, and Robert J. Alexander, *Communism in Latin America,* Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, N. J., 1957. The latter gives a more comprehensive picture of methods of Communist persuasion, but neither volume refers to the manipulation of nationalism by the Communists for the purpose of supporting their front policy. These two works, plus *Historia del Comunismo en America Latina,* by the writer of this article (Mexico City, 1954), constitute the principal sources of this brief study; in addition, the author has drawn upon his personal knowledge of many facts referred to in the article.

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present republics assumed statehood before ever having acquired separate national characteristics, and this circumstance in turn was responsible for the development of a "continental" feeling, a sense of each country's belonging to a bigger whole, Latin America.

Simon Bolivar, the most outstanding leader of the independence movements, was also a proponent of Latin American unity, and toward this effort even called a meeting of American states in Panama. Other attempts to promote Latin American unity followed; sometimes they were regional in nature (the Isthmus Federation, for example), sometimes political (establishment of the APRA in Peru). All these efforts failed, to be sure, but they had the effect of strengthening the desire for unity, particularly among the intellectuals and the middle class.

As a result, the Latin American intellectual was, until some twenty years ago, a "continentalist"; he advocated union of the Latin American countries in order to solve the great problems of the continent—to develop agriculture, improve education, lay foundations for the growth of democratic institutions, and encourage the emergence of a continental culture. The hope expressed in *La Raza Cosmica* by Jose Vasconcelos, the Mexican philosopher, conveyed the hopes of most Latin American intellectuals, regardless of political tendencies: In Latin America, Vasconcelos said, two cultures were being fused, the Western and the native. Likewise, two races, the white and the Indian, were being amalgamated. In the future, he thought, Latin America would be the place whence a new culture, a synthesis of East and West would emerge.

The development of national consciousness within the individual Latin American republics was based on concrete factors, not abstract ideas. It was the product not only of the administrative division of the colonial period, geographic factors, and personal ambitions of individual leaders, but also of the progressive mixing of races, the abolition of slavery, the formation of political parties (conservative and liberal), and, later, the development of industrialization and unionism.

Just as in the second half of the nineteenth century, the urgency of the problems of the moment forced the labor movement—originally established by the immigrants who left Europe after the 1848 revolutions and the Paris Commune—to adopt a pragmatic program without ideological objectives, so also the feeling of nationhood was pragmatic in its orientation. No one spoke of seeking supremacy over all Latin America; the ideas of expansion and national superiority, once common in the European nations, did not occur to anyone.[2]

The nationalism that developed in these circumstances could be called positive or realistic. The immediate tasks that arose with independence were so pressing that the attention both of the leaders and of the people was completely taken up with them—*e.g.*, how to deal with the acute problems of farmers without land, a middle class without schools, artisans without capital. A sense of nationalism developed only to the extent that each state placed itself in the service of its citizens. The nation was not a symbol, the result of a "glorious past," an abstract entity, but something concrete and tangible—the citizen and his commonwealth.

The Paradoxes of Politics

This explains why in Latin America, in spite of the propensity to rhetoric inherited from Spain, programs of all political parties, from the radical left to the radical right, have been almost invariably designed to meet the situation of the moment. Thus, one of the most permanent features of the liberal programs in the first half of the nineteenth century was the demand for annual budgets; and the conservatives during the same period insistently campaigned for increased immigration. In the last third of the nineteenth century, the socialist parties themselves and the labor unions did not clamor for the establishment of socialism, but rather sought laws to protect the health of the worker; and in Argentina their goal was payment of wages in gold pesos which could not be devaluated.[3] It may thus be said that in content and spirit, Latin American nationalism was closer to Anglo-Saxon nationalism than to that of Western Europe, in spite of the fact that during the entire period French and Spanish influence was much stronger than that of Great Britain and the United States; the latter was felt mostly in the constitutional organization of the new states.[4]

One of the consequences of this positive nationalism was that political and social doctrines were nationalized,

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[2] None of the wars between Latin American countries had as its purpose territorial conquest, and only one of them (the Pacific War, 1879-1881) resulted in significant boundary changes. Nor was a resort to arms necessary for Uruguay to separate Argentina and Guatemala from Mexico at the beginning of independence. See Luis Alberto Sanchez, *Breve Historia de America,* Mexico City, 1944, Chapters IV and VI.

[3] See the author's *Esquema historico del movimiento obrero en America Latina,* pp. 33 and 37.

[4] Practically all the Latin American states have adopted a presidential system of government, and many of them have adopted a federal system. See Sanchez, *op. cit.,* Chapter V.

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so to speak, when they arrived in Latin America; they were adapted to the necessities of the moment, and became pragmatic. There were—for example—anarchist, socialist, and labor union groups in Latin America, but none of them was revolutionary in attitude. Emigres from the Commune, who were the leaven in the South American, and especially Argentine, labor movement, directed their former revolutionary ardor into political campaigns for immediate and practical social reforms. The two Latin American social transformations that have been called revolutions (Mexico and Bolivia) were actually political movements to enact reforms, in spite of their revolutionary methods.[5] For a long time, therefore, European socialists and anarchists considered their Latin American friends mere reformers, and Moscow called Latin American Communists who endeavored to adapt the principles of the Third International to the specific situation in their countries "traitors" and "Trotskyites." [6]

At the same time, conservatives have frequently given the impression of being reformers because the nature of their nationalism has not permitted them to ignore the concrete situations they faced, situations in which there has often been little worth preserving. Thus, Lucas Alaman (1792-1853), the great Mexican historian and conservative politician, saw in the industrialization of his country the basis for political stability and devoted his time and fortune to establishing factories and industrial development banks. At that time this was a reformist attitude, because the typical conservative in nineteenth-century Latin America was a defender of the system of large landed estates.[7] And when a utopian such as the Mexican J. N. Adorno (1807-1887) appeared, he did not propose, in spite of the influence of Fourier on his ideas, that a new society be formed, but rather that workers' savings associations be set up to buy industries.[8]

For more than a century these were the dominant characteristics of nationalism in Latin America. As a spontaneous product of local social and political conditions, this nationalism is still alive among most Latin Americans—among farmers and workers, the middle class, and a part of the new industrial bourgeoisie.

For some of the people, however—and particularly large numbers of intellectuals—this attitude of positive nationalism was to undergo a profound change under the impact of Communist influence. To understand the significance of this change it is necessary to realize the important fact that political action in Latin America is traditionally stimulated and preceded by an intellectual movement, on first sight often far removed from the political arena.

The Role of the Intellectual

History abounds with examples. The Mexican revolution of 1910-1917 was ushered in by the struggle of Alfonso Caso and the so-called "Athens Generation" against the positivism that had served to justify the dictatorship of General Porfirio Diaz. In Peru, university reform—from which issued the idea of popular universities, the nursery of the Aprista movement—was defended by the literary magazine *Colonida,* beginning in 1915. The Brazilian "1922 Movement" was, according to one of its founders, the poet Mario de Andrade, "an announcement of the nascent revolutionary attitude which faced the problems of the country." [9]

This key role of the intellectual in politics is rooted in the social conditions of the Latin American countries. As a result of a high degree of illiteracy, poor communications, and inadequate dissemination of mass culture, the population as a whole exerts political pressure very rarely and for brief periods only. The single truly articulate, vocal and effective body of public opinion is the relatively small middle class, within which the intellectuals exercise considerable influence. Only by taking these facts into account can the importance of the intellectual climate in the political development of Latin America be properly assessed.

The characteristics of positive nationalism discussed above have long—and perhaps most clearly—been reflected in the arts and letters. All Western literary and artistic trends and schools of thought have generally enjoyed a favorable reception; but just as in the case of political and social doctrines, they have been quickly refashioned to suit the conditions and temperament of Latin America. They have lost their characteristics as

[5] Alba, *Esquema . . .*, Chapters II and III.

[6] Alba, *Historia . . .*, pp. 49-55.

[7] Moises Gonzales Navarro, *El pensamiento politico de Lucas Alaman,* Mexico City, 1952, *passim.*

[8] Pablo Gonzalez Casanova, *Una utopia en America,* Mexico City, 1953, p. 145.

[9] Pedro Henriquez Urefia, *Las corrientes literarias en la America Hispana,* Mexico City, 1949, Chapter VIII. The Aprista movement referred to is the one founded in 1924 by Victor Raul Haya de la Torre. The APRA (American Revolutionary Popular Alliance), which is nationalistic, revolutionary, democratic, and in certain respects socialistic in doctrine, has wielded a strong political influence in Peru ever since its inception. For information on the Aprista movement, see Harry Kantor, *Ideologia y programa del movimiento aprista,* Mexico City, 1955.

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schools of thought and become new media for expressing the immediate reality.

It is significant that all the literary histories of Latin America reveal two facts: an absence of abstract scholarship and an abundance of regional writers, essayists, poets and novelists dedicated to social criticism. In the nineteenth century this tendency was primarily expressed in the regional novel. The works of Euclides da Cunha, Ricardo Guiraldes, Quiroga, Jose Eustasio Rivera, Romulo Gallegos, Ciro Alegria, and Mariano Azuela fall in this category.

Much more recently, in the 1920's and the early 1930's, a new group of writers sprang into prominence. More radical than their predecessors, they denounced the social status of the Latin American working man: the rubber worker in the jungle, the Indian in the Andes, the peasant of the Mexican plateau. Some of them, like Jorge Icaza, Jorge Amado, Jose Revueltas, and the poets Nicolas Guillen, Cesar Vallejo, and Pablo Neruda were Communist sympathizers. Others, like Mauricio Magdaleno, Gabriela Mistral, Jorge Ferretis, Erico Verissimo, Rosa Arciniegas, Octavio Paz, Manuel Galvez, and J. L. Borges had no ideological tie with communism. But whatever the political sympathies of these men, in their work they were equally fired by the plight of the underprivileged Latin American.

The outcries of social protest which for a decade and a half following World War I permeated literature as well as other art forms found their expression in a new realism, as vigorous and as nonconformist in its tendencies as the parallel, socially conscious cubist, symbolist, and surrealist movements in Europe.[10] But, significantly, the preoccupation in Latin America was principally with the lot of the individual rather than with the abstract collective identity of the nation. In the arts, as in literature, man was ever present, and supplied the themes for two big schools of painting: the muralists of Mexico and the easel painters of Brazil. The Indian, the Negro, the man-in-the-street—all entered the paintings, just as they entered, through their folklore, the music of Villa-Lobos, Silvestre Revueltas, and others.

It is important to stress that the social consciousness that pervaded the arts and letters after World War I had essentially indigenous roots and remained, until the early 1930's, by and large unaffected by direct Communist influence. The Communist movement had until then been extremely weak and ineffective in Latin America. It lacked power in the labor movement, it never had as much as a foothold among the rural population, and it received little if any support from the vocal and influential middle class.

Even the intellectuals remained largely isolated from Communist influence. It is true that many of them had admired some of the accomplishments of the Bolshevik revolution, but they had generally found Moscow's rigid adherence to the revolutionary dogma of class warfare unpalatable and singularly unsuited to the Latin American scene. In addition, the Latin American middle class intellectual, unlike his European counterpart, did not suffer from an historical guilt complex *vis-à-vis* his underprivileged fellow citizens, and thus was not inclined to sublimate his malaise in the party's fold. Nor did the weak Communist parties hold out much promise as instruments for satisfying any latent yen for power. In fact, knowledge of Marxism *per se* did not begin to spread widely among intellectual circles until the early 1930's. Until then, with a few exceptions mentioned above, it had been popular only in certain Argentine and Chilean socialist groups.

The Emergence of a New Pattern

By 1935 the situation began to change rapidly. The new flexibility of the Popular Front policy brought the Latin American Communists the opportunity to break out of their isolation. Their first logical target was the intellectuals; only through them could the Communists hope to exert influence over the middle class—the students, technicians, professionals, industrial bourgeoisie.

As it happened, the middle 1930's found large sections of the Latin American intelligentsia in a particularly vulnerable state of mind. Not unlike many of their counterparts elsewhere in the West, they were afflicted by a deep sense of frustration. Neither their teaching and writing, nor their protests had prevented the rise of dictatorships. At the time the Popular Front became the Communist slogan of the day, dictatorial regimes were in power in Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, Venezuela, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Cuba. Everywhere else democracy appeared unstable. Bitter memories of certain United States acts of intervention still lingered in the minds of many. Dissatisfied and disheartened, the intellectual searched for some means of bringing effectiveness to his convictions.

[10] Luis Alberto Sanchez, *Nueva Historia de la Literatura Americana,* Buenos Aires, 1944, pp. 420-433; Pedro Henriques Urena, *Historia de la Cultura en la America Hispanica,* Mexico City, 1949, Chapter VIII. The selection must of necessity be arbitrary, but while the authors represent different positions or tendencies, together they provide a complete picture of Latin American letters between the two World Wars.

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The task confronting the Communists was one of finding an approach which would allow them not only to appeal to the intellectuals emotionally, but also to draw them into political complicity. The approach had to be effective with the liberal professor, the leftist journalist and the revolutionary student, but also with the right-center politician and the conservative businessman. The Communists' answer was a new, radical and negative brand of nationalism. Its slogans were abstract and irrational watchwords extolling the "national glories" and the "pre-Columbian civilizations" of the Latin American countries; its effect was to supplant the humanitarian aspirations of the synthesizing nationalism Latin America had known before.

Over a period of years during the 1930's the Communists' new brainchild of negative nationalism succeeded in bringing about a change in the ideological orientation of the world of art and letters. There were exceptions, of course, especially among the more outstanding figures of the intellectual community; but a majority of the intellectuals and artists gradually came to adopt positions opposed to the traditional ideas of positive nationalism. This new, negative nationalism has continued to have crucial influence until very recent years; to understand its impact, it is necessary to know its characteristics.

The Nature of Negative Nationalism

1.) *It is isolationist and autarchist.* One of the favorite themes of many writers during the past twenty years has been that indigenous tradition alone is the source of all progress, that the national culture needs no European or other foreign influences. Minor figures have been built up as great reformers in order to find a basis for this kind of cultural isolationism. Thus in Mexico an effort was made at one time to convert the third-rate poets of the so-called "Metaphor" group (the title of the magazine they publish) into literary prophets. The reason for this was clearly their solid record of cultural chauvinism. During another period there was an attempt to induce Mexican artists to model themselves after the great nineteenth-century engraver Jose Guadalupe Posada, whose work was marked by symbols of death. And so skulls appeared for two decades in the works of almost all Mexican engravers. This was not just a matter of temporary predilection; the style was consciously directed and motivated.

2.) *It is separatist.* Mention was made earlier of the "continentalism" which had long been prevalent in Latin American intellectual circles. With the coming of the new nationalism this spirit virtually disappeared, and it is now limited to the formalities of inter-American diplomacy. No one any longer speaks of a Latin American culture, but of Uruguayan, Salvadoran or Mexican culture. The absurd situation has thus developed where nations with the same traditions, similar political and economic organization, the same language and similar aspirations, consider themselves not interdependent, but completely independent in cultural as well as in political and economic matters.

3.) *It is antiquarian.* The negative nationalist has searched the past for literary themes and other elements to bolster his present attitudes; he has considered himself a cultural descendant of the pre-Columbian Indians and in extreme cases even has proposed the establishment of autonomous republics of certain indigenous peoples (Mayas in Mexico, Aymaras in Bolivia). A typical case is that of Vicente Lombardo Toledano, Secretary General of the CTAL (Latin American Confederation of Labor, an affiliate of the Communist-dominated World Federation of Trade Unions), who as candidate for the presidency of Mexico in 1952 opened his election campaign by taking an "oath of loyalty" before the supposed tomb of the Aztec king Cuauhtemoc.[11] Painters, for their part, have more and more tended to give us pictures of the pre-Columbian peoples as in the murals and frescoes of Diego Rivera and O'Gorman in Mexico.[12] Mexican ballet companies are actually groups of folklore dancers who have endeavored to present Aztec and Mayan dances and have paid little attention to modern ballet. No less revealing, in this connection, is the dispute still raging between Mexican architects over whether new Mexican architecture should take its inspiration from the pre-Cortezian esthetics of the quadrangular pyramid, or whether such reminiscences should be discarded. To understand the significance of all these attitudes we must imagine how it would be if an attempt were made in France to base ballet and architecture on what we know of the customs of the Gauls, or if political candidates "took an oath of loyalty" to the spirit of Vercingetorix.

4.) *It is symbolistic.* Specific, real themes have been replaced with more general, often symbolic themes. Thus, for example, a novel on current events may be constructed in the form of a fable. This penchant for

[11] *Excelsior,* September 17, 1951.

[12] It should be stated that in Diego Rivera this tendency to archaize preceded the period under review. It is found in his frescoes at Cuernavaca and the Palacio Nacional in Mexico City, done thirty or more years ago. Rivera's great influence helps to explain the ease with which this tendency to archaize was accepted by intellectual circles throughout Latin America.

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the abstract and the didactic is exemplified in the novels of the Mexican Jose Revueltas, the paintings of David A. Siqueiros, the later paintings of Diego Rivera (such as the murals on peace and Guatemala, which caused such a furor in Mexican intellectual circles in 1952 and 1955), and also in the poetry of the Chilean Pablo Neruda, the novels of the Brazilian Jorge Amado, and the music of the Cuban Nicolas Guillen. In other writers who do not have Communist affiliations this propensity for symbols is less evident, but very few have managed to escape the influence entirely during the past years. The symbols are almost always abstract: the nation, the enemy of the nation, Nazi-Fascism, and. lately, American imperialism, peace, warmongers.

Sprouting Seeds in Fertile Soil

The permeation of Latin American arts and letters by the ideology of negative nationalism was not simply the result of Communist propaganda. The appeals were effective indeed, and the audience was receptive, but the Communists' success would certainly have been less striking if they had not availed themselves of the more stringent methods of administrative persuasion, or to use a harsher word, blackmail. During the era of Popular Front amity, many party members and sympathizers contrived to infiltrate a whole range of institutions in the field of culture and information—newspaper offices, publishing houses, private and public cultural organizations. From these positions they were able to reward their friends and punish their enemies in the intellectual world. In short, they established a certain measure of informal censorship, by means of which they denied employment or publishing rights to many artists and writers who failed to conform to the Communist-sponsored cultural precepts, to the abstractions and chauvinism of the new nationalist spirit. Some of the artists who refused to respond to the appeals of the Communist campaign finally crumbled under this more drastic method of persuasion and were swallowed up by the new conformity.

At the same time, in their efforts to garner the political allegiance of as many political interests as possible, the Communists also abandoned many of their past doctrinaire positions. They forgot class warfare and with easy expediency began to support any element or issue which might further the cause. In Chile, where in 1938 they established the first Popular Front government in Latin America, they persuaded a wealthy landowner, the Radical Pedro Aguirre Cerda, to become the Popular Front candidate for the presidency. In Mexico, only twenty months after denouncing President Cardenas as "the one responsible for carrying forward . . . the program of fascization and strengthening of Yankee imperialism in Mexico," the Communist Party changed its line to praise his government as one of "true progress toward a more advanced stage in the (Mexican) Revolution." [13]

In a similar spirit Lombardo Toledano, whose rise as a para-Communist labor leader coincided with the evolution of the Popular Front policy, felt free by 1942 to negotiate a friendship pact between strongly protectionist Mexican management organizations and the Mexican Confederation of Workers which he headed. By then, of course the Soviet Union had already entered the war. Two statements of Lombardo's made at the CTAL congress in Cali will illuminate the Communist position of the "patriotic war" period: "We have come a very long way from those romantic, sterile attitudes that prompted us to utter impassioned cries against imperialism"; and, "During the war against the Nazi-Fascist axis the working class should not employ the strike as a normal fighting weapon".[14]

The Communists' novel political posture and their nationalist campaign soon brought dividends in the political arena. Their attitude was as effective in Latin America as it turned out to be a few years later in Europe. They succeeded in having themselves elected to the legislative bodies of a number of Latin American countries. In 1940 there were 12 Communist deputies in Chile, 17 in Brazil, 12 in Cuba, 6 in Costa Rica, and 6 in Uruguay. The Chilean President Gonzales Videla included a Communist minister in his cabinet (1946-1947), and even President Batista of Cuba was persuaded to do the same at an earlier date (1942-1944).[15] It was, after all, comfortable to have no adversaries on the left.

The policy of negative nationalism was primarily designed to seduce and appease the intellectuals and the liberal political elements. But the aim was wider in scope, as was indicated before. Not only was the integrity of the left wing to be subverted; it was to be put to sleep so as to leave the Communists free to court without protest the political right. The soporific was effective, enabling the Communists to establish amicable relations with all the Latin American dictators during the war. Later, when in the wake of the Peronist movement a new wave of dictatorships swept over the Amer-

[13] Hernan, Laborde, *Hacia el Frente Popular Antiimperialista en Mexico,* Mexico City, 1935, and a speech of September 14, 1937.

[14] Alba, *Esquema* . . . , p. 102.

[15] *Ibid.,* p. 88.

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icas, the Communists maintained an ambivalent attitude, courting both sides of the fence. They were thus in the position to infiltrate the entourage of the dictators as well as the exiled democratic opposition groups. In their self-appointed role of "critical patronage" they served the dictators as advisers on labor problems while they extended their own control over the labor unions and confused the man-in-the-street on the real nature of dictatorship. On occasion they even used their privileged positions to pressure the dictators into commercial relations with the Soviet Union and the "people's democracies".

Thus a supra-nationalist campaign that had begun as a propagandistic foray aimed at the intellectuals developed into a systematic method of Communist infiltration of all the facets of Latin American national life. As a result, communism for the first time became a considerable factor in Latin American politics.

The Case of Mexico

The Communists have applied—and are still applying—similar techniques of cultural and political subversion in the underdeveloped countries of other continents, using variations as required by the special characteristics of each country. Latin America in this respect has served as a laboratory for Moscow. It might be worthwhile therefore, to see precisely how this subversion was undertaken in a specific situation. A good example is that of the Mexican artistic world, where the development of negative nationalism reached a stage of such refinement that the personal, ideological and material interests of some Communist artists became inseparably intermingled.

In the early 1920's a group of Mexican painters ranged around Diego Rivera and David Alfaro Siqueiros set forth the principles of "revolutionary art." In proper Marxist style, they proclaimed that painting must be realistic in form and social in content; it must be accessible to the masses and serve toward their enlightenment; it should therefore be executed in murals and supported by the state. With the help of well organized public relations and the support of certain politicians, the group was increasingly successful in pushing its claim to be the *only valid school of painting; over a period of years it* managed to establish a virtual monopoly over official commissions, exhibition halls, and the media of criticism.

Thus the Leftists were already well entrenched in their domination over the Mexican art world when the ideology of negative nationalism came to the fore. With little difficulty, they adapted the "revolutionary" slogans of the 1920's to the new pseudo-nationalist line.

As applied to artistic activity in Mexico, the ideas of negative nationalism have been aptly summed up in two remarks by Siqueiros, perhaps the chief exponent of "socialist realism" in Latin America: Mexican art (produced by Communists) is good, he said, "because it is Mexican"; moreover, "There is no other way than ours" —the Communist. These two statements and how they were applied—that is, to blacklist as "traitors to Mexican art" anyone who would not accept them as precepts—express better than any description, the real meaning of the technique which the writer has endeavored to analyze.

Bringing its influence to bear, this group persistently and effectively hampered the careers of any artists who refused to toe the line. It was largely successful, for example, in preventing muralists not of its school from winning commissions for work on public buildings. Other artists found the doors of the exhibition halls and museums closed to their works. Those who did manage to make a name for themselves despite such pressures found themselves the target of violent attack on the basis not of their artistic ability but of their alleged "un-Mexicanism"—and worse. Among the principal victims were the painters Rufino Tamayo, Maria Izquierdo, and Jose Clemente Orozco. Tamayo, for example, was not able to exhibit his work in Mexico for many years, and was viciously attacked when he finally did. This is what Tamayo's fellow painter O'Gorman, a Communist sympathizer, had to say about his colleague:

> **Actually, Tamayo's painting is in line with a popular demagogic action which proposes to support a reactionary position. One of the reasons why his works are sold at such high prices is that his painting effectively serves the interests of the social class it represents. The earnest desire of the professional critics of Europe and America to present Rufino Tamayo as Mexico's greatest painter, above Rivera and Siqueiros, clearly indicates the reactionary position of Tamayo's painting within the Mexican plastic movement." [16]**

Such harsh politicalization of artistic criticism rarely occurs on other continents—except, of course, in the Communist countries. But in Latin America, this type of comment has frequently been voiced during the past twenty years, because negative nationalism created an atmosphere in which it was accepted. By labeling independent artists and writers as "non-national" at best—or as "reactionaries selling out to imperialism" and "traitors to their country" in the case of more formidable opponents—the Communists weakened their adversaries and intimidated the irresolute.

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[16] V. Alba, *Coloquios de Coyoacan con Rufino Tamayo*, Mexico City, 1956, p. 22.

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Communist hegemony over the arts in Mexico extended well beyond the sphere of painting. Similar influence was extended over the theater and motion pictures (even though for a briefer period), over magazines and publishing houses, and even reached into institutions of higher learning. In all of these fields, the Communists used their control over patronage as a political instrument, in pursuit of the same set of purposes: creating a mass audience and making it receptive to Communist propaganda, promoting the interests of their adherents, and developing a following of disciples and clients while smothering any competitive ideas, work or talent outside of their own camp. And such, for a time, was their public following that even non-Communist intellectuals often felt themselves compelled to outbid their Communist colleagues in proofs of fervent and intransigent nationalism. Nationalist ideas were thus intermingled with professional interests and personal vanities, and these elements in combination were put to use to serve political goals.[17]

Beginning of a Change

In Mexico, as well as in the other Latin American countries, a reaction has recently set in against the regimentation of the past. Today's generation of young intellectuals and artists did not experience the romantic epoch of the Popular Front; emotional appeals made in its name fail to impress them, and they refuse to join new Communist fronts. Some, under the influence of a few outstanding figures who resisted the Communist appeal, others on their own account, keep the doors of the cultural world open both to foreign experiments and to contact with the man-in-the-street. The twenty years of negative, sterilizing nationalism are passing into the pages of history, and new prospects are opening up for free, unrestricted creation, without watchwords and official prophets. The advent of the new spirit has already brought forth abundant works of originality and depth.

One of the most significant signs of this renaissance is a revival of the Latin American consciousness. Thought is beginning to be directed again not only toward the Paraguayan, the Brazilian, and the Chilean, but toward the Latin American. If for two decades negative nationalism caused intellectuals to turn back to symbols of the past, they now once again turn their sights toward the future, and a new, more united Latin America is beginning to take shape in their minds.

What are the causes of this incipient change? In the first place, Latin America is still confronted with unsolved problems—economic, cultural and social—and, as we have seen negative nationalism, far from facilitating their solution, has only aggravated them. The young intellectuals, looking at the situation of their respective countries and of the continent as a whole, cannot help perceiving the pernicious effect that negative nationalism has had in these respects, as well as in its stifling limitations of cultural development. In the latter sense, the interest of the new Latin American intellectual generation in French existentialism, in Keynesian economic theories, in the newest jazz forms, etc., has been indicative of a rebirth, not because these things have had any profound influence upon the actual product of Latin American cultural activity, but simply because the interest in them, of itself, signifies a realization of the possibility of finding new paths and new solutions outside the narrow limits imposed by negative nationalism.

In the second place, there is today a much better understanding of communism, of its history and its propaganda methods, than in the period of the Popular Front or immediately after World War II. Though this understanding is still far from general in Latin American society, it is spreading; and it serves as a kind of vaccine against easy infection by the philosophy of negative nationalism.

This is not to say, however, that negative nationalism has entirely lost its power of seduction or ceased to hobble intellectual development. With the whole arsenal of highly-developed Communist propaganda techniques at their disposal, the sponsors of negative nationalism are quick to exploit for their own ends any real grievances which arise, as well as those artificially fabricated by their own propaganda. Recent events in Latin America have demonstrated that these elements still retain enough of their grip to require long and persistent effort before their influence will be overcome. This is a task, essentially, of promoting greater clarity of thought, of supplying factual information, of clearing away the cobwebs caused by over-indulgence in the intoxicating wine of negative nationalism. Obviously, it is a task which only those Latin American intellectuals who already have reawakened can undertake and bring to final success.

[17] The publication *Est & Ouest,* Paris, No. 187, Jan 16, 1958, gives many interesting details relating to Communist influence on the cultural, journalistic, and other aspects of Mexican life, and confirms the account as sketched above.

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Czechoslovakia—"Stable" Satellite

By Otto Pick

WHEN KHRUSHCHEV VISITED Czechoslovakia in the summer of 1957 he had good cause to praise the leaders of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, to express his full confidence in his comrades in Prague and to single out Antonin Novotny, the First Secretary, for special commendation. He told the Czech Communists that they were fortunate in having at their head so "worthy a son of the Czechoslovak people." At the time there was some speculation that following on the disgrace of Molotov, Malenkov and Kaganovich for their alleged doctrinaire views, Khrushchev would use this opportunity to force some changes on the Prague regime, which had stubbornly adhered to the basic policies of the Stalinist period. Khrushchev, however, was far too astute to take any risks by rocking the boat in Prague: the steadfastness and rigidity of the Communist dictatorship in Czechoslovakia had proved to be of immense value during the crises in Poland and Hungary, and there was no point in his inviting further trouble by encouraging changes where immobility had served so well.

On the contrary, Khrushchev appeared to be fully conscious of his debt to the Czech Communists. When the whole structure of Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe was threatened in October 1956, the regime managed to hold Czechoslovakia in line, thereby maintaining a geographical barrier between the Polish and Hungarian revolts and helping to prevent the situation from getting completely out of hand.

Presumably the ambitious and comparatively youthful Novotny (he is 53) had his reward when Moscow agreed to his succession to the presidency—left vacant by Antonin Zapotocky's death last November—while retaining his position as party First Secretary. The assignment of the leading offices in both party and state to one person is rare in Eastern Europe. At the time Khrushchev himself had not yet grasped the Soviet premiership, and for a few months Novotny's position was unique.[1] It is difficult to explain his ascendancy except as a result of Khrushchev's support. Indeed, it would not have been surprising if Zapotocky's death had been used to abolish the office of president altogether. Czechoslovakia is the last European "people's democracy" to retain an individual as head of state; the others have all adopted the Soviet example of entrusting this function to a collective body under a chairman.

On the other hand, the prestige of the office has always been high in Czechoslovakia, and therefore useful to the Communists. The prewar presidents, Thomas Masaryk and Edward Benes, were men of outstanding stature and exerted great influence on the country's political life. The late Klement Gottwald, who displaced Benes ten years ago, was allowed to combine the presidency with the party leadership, but Zapotocky, as successor in 1953, held no party office apart from membership in the Politburo. With Zapotocky's demise the last obvious Communist candidate of any stature disappeared (barring perhaps, Premier Viliam Siroky, about whom more will be said); it is a measure of the mediocrity of his comrades in the Politburo that Novotny achieved this preeminence at so early an age.

Yet the present arrangement is an accurate reflection of the true state of affairs in Czechoslovakia, as indeed in any Communist state. The Communist Party is the only effective instrument of political power, and it is

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[1] In the aftermath of the Hungarian uprising Kadar had assumed the premiership as well as the party leadership for several months, but subsequently relinquished the former to Ferenc Muennich.

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therefore logical that its head should occupy the highest position in the state. The other political parties and the National Assembly are tolerated only to give a semblance of parliamentarianism to the Communist dictatorship.[2] Communist control in Czechoslovakia has been complete since 1948: at no stage has there been any doubt about the regime's ability to maintain itself in power. There have been no signs that a mutinous majority could seize the initiative, as it did in Hungary for a time, or that a dissident group inside the party could oust the ruling clique by relying on national sentiment, as happened in Poland.

This does not mean, however, that the Czech Communists have sailed a smooth course free of troubles. On the contrary, they have faced—and continue to face—a number of critical problems, some of them inherited from the past and rooted in long-standing national issues, others the product of developments in the Soviet orbit since the death of Stalin. The present paper aims at examining the political, cultural and economic life of Czechoslovakia today to see what these factors of friction are; how they affect the nature and methods of Communist rule; and finally, why—despite their existence—the regime has been able to maintain a strong and relatively stable hold over the population.

A House Divided

One of the major problems plaguing the Czechoslovak Communists is a product of the country's political history—to wit, the deep-seated antagonism existing between the Czech majority and the Slovak minority, whose ratio in the population is well over two to one.[3] The resentments arising out of nationality feeling have had repercussions not only in the regime's relations with the people but within the party organization itself.

For reasons of their own, quite apart from the nationality issue, the Communists set up two parties after World War II—the Czechoslovak CP and the Slovak CP, the latter taking the form of an autonomous adjunct to the former. This was a purely tactical move at the time to gain an advantage over other political parties in all types of institutions, including the Provisional Assembly, where representation was allotted in equal strength to all political parties.[4] After the 1948 *coup d'état* the fiction of separate organizations was preserved, the Slovak CP continuing to have its own Central Committee, Politburo and other authoritative bodies, and to hold its own congresses, somewhat along the lines of the Republic Communist parties in the USSR.

In 1945 Slovakia was also given an autonomous government, but as Communist strength in that part of the country has never been very impressive, the governmental authority has been restricted and often disregarded by Prague. The dissatisfaction caused by this situation has penetrated the party organization, at times in the past affecting even the leadership of the Slovak Communists. Several purges of "bourgeois nationalist deviationists" have taken place, but despite these periodic crackdowns, nationalist sentiment has continued to be the skeleton in the cupboard. In short, although Czechoslovakia has seemed to be more than immune against "national communism," she has in fact her own internal brand in the form of Slovak discontent. Many Slovak Communists must have resented in particular the choice of the comparative newcomer Novotny for the presidency at the expense of Premier Siroky, a Communist veteran and a Slovak.

Early this year the Central Committee of the Slovak CP met to consider the question of Slovak separatist sentiment. Bacilek, its First Secretary, echoed many of the indictments of bourgeois nationalism made in the past. Complaining of vestiges of the Populist spirit,[5] he said:

We must overcome tendencies aimed at dividing Slovak science from national research work. . . . In the schools more care must be devoted to the education of young people in a spirit of Czechoslovak patriotism. The Slovak press, radio, film and television industries must do more to inform our workers of life in all parts of the republic and to educate them in a spirit of Czechoslovak patriotism.[6]

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[2] Besides the two CPs in Czechoslovakia (see further) there are four other parties: the Socialist Party, the People's (Catholic) Party, the Slovak Revival Party and the Slovak Freedom Party. All of these are rumps of pre-1948 parties which were infiltrated and taken over by fellow travelers; they support the Communist-led government, and in elections join with the Communists in a single slate of approved candidates.

[3] The State Statistical Office issued the following population figures in early 1957: 13,296,243, total pop.: 8,834,324 Czechs; 3,700,085 Slovaks; 404,280 Hungarians; 163,867 Germans; 78,156 Poles; 74,898 Ukrainians; and 40,633 others.

[4] This tactic was especially important in Slovakia, where the only other party created after the war was the Slovak Democratic Party, with which the Communists thus shared equal power.

[5] Slovak separatist sentiment was epitomized by the prewar Populist Party, founded by the Catholic priest Hlinka. The Populists spearheaded the demand for Slovak autonomy which eventually led to the establishment of a separate "Slovak State" under Germany's protection in 1939. Thus they contributed substantially to the breakup of the Czechoslovak Republic.

[6] *Rude Pravo* (Prague), January 10, 1958.

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In May Bacilek spoke again on the same topic, this time before a full Congress of the Slovak CP.

The ill feeling between nationalities is a two-way affair: that the Communists face an equal problem in coping with the Czechs' dislike of the Slovaks was underlined by the party organ *Rude Pravo* a few days after Bacilek's diatribe against the Slovak separatists last January. The paper complained that "expressions of Czech nationalism" were being circulated by various "bourgeois and reactionary" elements, adding:

These [elements] try to spread doubt among the Czech workers concerning the desirability of the industrialization of Slovakia; they try to drive a wedge between our two nations in order to derive benefits from our differences for their counterrevolutionary aims.[7]

The problem of Czech-Slovak antagonism is further complicated by the existence of other national minorities with problems and prejudices of their own. These include Hungarians, Germans, Poles, Ukrainians and other groups, comprising about 760,000 of the total population of 13.3 million.[8]

The friction which arises out of this situation not only reduces the efficiency of the Communist regime but leads to parochialism in economic management, and generally aggravates other sources of discontent affecting the population. It is therefore vigorously opposed by the Prague government for reasons of both political expediency and practical necessity. Nevertheless, from Moscow's point of view it is not altogether undesirable. The very existence of this problem, its bitter past and the many purges connected with it since the war have transformed it into an element of disunity within the top echelons of the Communist Party. This, in turn, has helped to prevent the formation of a really cohesive group capable of advocating a more independent policy.

The Party vs. the Intellectuals

The nationality conflict indirectly enters into various other problems confronting the regime in Prague. Not the least of these has been its struggle against "deviationist" and "revisionist" sentiment among the intelligentsia, the most vocal element of which has been the Slovak intellectuals.

The relaxation of extreme Stalinist pressure which followed the dramatic Twentieth CPSU Congress of February 1956 had its effect on intellectuals in Czechoslovakia just as in the USSR itself and the other Communist countries. As early as April 1956 some writers tried to argue that they had betrayed their role as the "nation's conscience" by glossing over the deficiencies and misdeeds of the Stalinist era.

The party leadership, however, was not disposed to allow this criticism to get out of hand, and particularly after the effects of intellectual ferment had become obvious in Poland and Hungary, moved quickly to suppress manifestations of independent thought. In general, the regime has been successful in stifling outward political criticism or expressions of opposition; by July 1957 some of the more forthright critics of party policies and practices—among them the poet Frantisek Hrubin, who had spoken out with particular courage in April 1956—were induced to retract their views in an orgy of self-criticism at a meeting of the Czechoslovak Writers' Congress. Hrubin's self-abasing statement apparently "redeemed" him in party eyes, for in May of this year he figured among the recipients of the annual "Gottwald Prizes." Some Slovak literary men—including the noted Frantisek Hecko—have been braver in refusing to debase themselves and in persisting in their pleas for greater cultural freedom, but they have had to put up with constant threatening attacks on their allegedly "bourgeois-nationalist" sentiments.

While Czechoslovak intellectuals have not made any political impact comparable to the ferment stirred up in Poland and Hungary, they have shown continuing passive determination to avoid a return to the complete subservience to party doctrine which prevailed before 1954. A number of leading writers—imitating colleagues throughout the Soviet bloc and in the USSR itself—have taken refuge in what the Communist regimes have called a "conspiracy of silence," refusing to discuss their past work critically or to produce new work in line with party directives. Such writers were recently described by a regime-line critic as "reserved heroes," who "prefer to play the part of mere onlookers instead of accepting active responsibility for the party's literary policy." [9]

To judge by official criticism, artists and musicians have shown equal indifference to party exhortations. The party paper *Rude Pravo* recently castigated creative talents for opposing the party's resolutions and the principles of Leninism by pursuing culture and art without aim: "We are faced by a shortage of ideas, by the application of bourgeois ideology, by a retreat from revolutionary concepts in art, by liberalism." [10]

The trend of criticism—which is often specifically

[7] *Ibid.*, January 24, 1958.
[8] See footnote 2.
[9] Jiri Hajek's commentary in *Rude Pravo*, January 7,1958.
[10] *Rude Pravo*, January 16, 1958.

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directed to or at Slovak intellectuals—reveals particular concern over expressions of interest in Western cultural thought and activity. Vice-Premier Vaclav Kopecky, who regards himself as the party's cultural pundit, reflected the official view in a sarcastic comment at the Slovak Party Congress last May:

It must be said that certain so-called modernist and other mistaken trends, which still affect some Slovak writers, artists and intellectuals, spring basically from the fact that they have misinterpreted the meaning of the Twentieth CPSU Congress. They jumped to the conclusion that we had conceded the failure of our socialist art and had turned away from socialist realism; that we had retreated before the culture of the capitalist West, that we had recognized its intellectual superiority and its cultural and artistic wealth, allegedly created in freedom.[11]

Elsewhere in his speech Kopecky attacked the "conceited" view that writers are the "conscience of the nation" with a claim to "moral and political leadership": "We have time and again explained that the Communist Party has been called to this duty by history and by the people."

In similar vein, the Central Committee of the Slovak CP has criticized "revisionism" in music and the visual arts, voicing particular indignation because the review *Slovenska hudba* (Slovak Music) and *Kulturny zivot* (Cultural Life) had dared to ascribe the shortcomings of Slovak music to insufficient contacts with musical activities in the West.[12]

Despite official denunciations, the plea for foreign cultural contacts continues; this desire seems to be not so much a manifestation of cultural frustration as a more politically-oriented thirst for freedom. For example, in a list of New Year's wishes of leading artists, published in the review *Kultura* last December, the painter Jan Bauch wrote, "Let us see the restoration of artists' associations of differing creative views," while the well-known actor Frantisek Filipovsky declared, "Let all the world's windows be opened for our artists." [13] More recently, the Union of Czechoslovak Composers appealed to the National Assembly for permission to regulate its own relations with musical organizations abroad.[14]

Disaffection Among the Youth

The regime might discount unrest and non-compliance among established writers and artists as the attitude of a small and non-typical minority, but it cannot ignore the implications of parallel attitudes among the Czechoslovak student population and young people in general. As elsewhere in the Soviet orbit, the Twentieth CPSU Congress acted as a catalyst releasing long pent-up discontent among Czechoslovak students. In meetings and demonstrations throughout the spring of 1956 they voiced demands for more academic freedom—specifically, for the abolition of compulsory courses in Marxism-Leninism and a reassessment of the higher educational curriculum—as well as for greater freedom of the press and, on a more practical level, for increased scholarship funds and better student housing accommodations.[15] The fall events in Hungary and Poland also evoked widespread support and sympathy from the Czechoslovak students for their rebelling neighbors. As in the case of the intellectuals, the regime has been able through force and circumstance to keep student unrest from getting out of control; that it lurks on beneath the surface, however, has been manifested in various ways, such as the disappointment evinced by university youth when the Polish student paper *Po Prostu* was suppressed in November 1957.

Just as disturbing, from the regime's point of view, are the signs of irresponsibility, indifference to Communist objectives and outright hooliganism among other elements of the youth. The rash of items in the Czechoslovak press reporting petty mischief and criminal activity by young rowdies and street gangs is testimony to the failure of the Communist Youth League to get a hold on many young people in urban areas. The Ministry of the Interior probably fools no one in its efforts to hide this failure by blaming "foreign agents" and employees of Western embassies for encouraging youthful gangsterism. The problem of juvenile delinquency is not, of course, confined to Communist society, but its existence affords embarrassing disproof of communism's claim to being the best of all possible worlds.

STILL ANOTHER ELEMENT of friction on the Czechoslovak scene has been the hostility between the regime and the Roman Catholic Church, the effects of which have again been more apparent in Slovakia, where the hierarchy's influence has always been much stronger than in the Czech provinces. Since the removal of Archbishop Beran of Prague from his see in 1951, the Communists have made no attempt to reach any real understanding with the Church, and there is absolutely no parallel to the give-and-take situation which prevailed

[11] Quoted on Bratislava Radio, May 17, 1958.
[12] *Pravda* (Bratislava), January 15, 1958.
[13] *Kultura* (Prague), December 26, 1957.
[14] *Svobodne Slovo* (Prague), January 15, 1958.
[15] See, for example, *Mlada Fronta* (Prague), April 29, 1956.

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in Poland for a while (though it now seems at an end). While the Czech regime has recently made a show of concession in the form of somewhat larger financial appropriations for the upkeep of old church buildings and some easing of the restrictions on religious processions, it has made clear that it has no intention of yielding on fundamental issues, such as the existing prohibitions on religious education and the restraints imposed on the authority of the bishops.

More ominous, since the spring of 1957 the authorities have waged a virulent and terroristic campaign against the Salesian Order of the Church. During last summer a number of its members were arrested on charges of espionage and sentenced to severe prison terms; several nuns were also tried as alleged conspirators.[16]

The Persistence of Terror

These trials were symptomatic not only of the regime's determination to combat religious influence but also of its continuing resort to police terror, which remains an ubiquitous fact of Czechoslovak life and in fact has lately been on the increase. In this respect the Czechoslovak Communists seem to be outdoing their comrades in most of the other East European countries: the very slight relaxation of police pressure after 1953 is no longer in evidence, and reports of trials of "enemies of the people" and of arrests of spies and agents are again a regular feature of the press and radio. It seems that the regime which weathered the difficult weeks of October and November 1956 so well is nonetheless seeking absolute insurance that there will be no repetition of the Hungarian uprising in Czechoslovakia. As the latest step to "improve" the police supervision system, the regime last March ordered the creation of "Local Security Commissions," attached to the Local National Committees, or grassroots organs of government. The announced aim of this action was to contribute to "closer contacts" between the population and the security authorities, and to induce ordinary citizens to take part in the maintenance of public security.[17]

While arrests and trials of alleged spies, thieves of national property, agents, smugglers, *etc.*, have been getting considerable publicity, the recent highlight in political circuses has been the trial of ex-members of the Hlinka Guard, the parliamentary organization attached to the prewar separatist Populist Party in Slovakia (see footnote 3). At a press conference in Bratislava on March 14, 1957, Minister of the Interior Rudolf Barak announced that 47 Slovak fascist war criminals would be put before the courts.[18] The charge against them was that they had murdered over 3,000 people in the closing months of World War II, including members of the British, French and US forces. In connection with the trial, the Czechoslovak government asked a number of Western countries for the extradition of other past members of the Hlinka Guard.

Guilt by Association

Communist anti-religious propaganda attempts to counter Church influence by evoking the memory of wartime Nazi massacres, allegedly condoned by the priest and lay supporters (Ludactvi) of the Populist (Catholic) Party which ruled in Slovakia during the war. The caption reads: "Ludactvi: Pray and Work!"

—From Dikobraz (Prague), April 24, 1958.

Barak tried to explain the delay in placing these people on trial by saying that "time is a just judge and in some cases it took years to establish the truth." That this explanation could have fooled anyone seems unlikely, however, in view of the fact that many of those named as war criminals had already been convicted and served sentences for other wartime crimes years ago. It seems obvious that the regime has dragged out this old issue as a tactic of warning to discourage separatist tendencies within and without the party in Slovakia.

Economic Compensations

If the picture presented by political developments in Czechoslovakia shows very little change since the days

[16] See reports in *Rude Pravo,* June 25, and September 17, 1957.

[17] Prague Radio, March 28, 1958.

[18] Broadcast of press conference, Bratislava Radio, March 14, 1958.

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of Stalin, there has been at least some compensation in the lives of the people in the form of improved material conditions. In recent years the living standard has been rising—in fact, in comparison to Czechoslovakia's less fortunate neighbors, it is almost luxurious. Unlike their comrades elsewhere in Eastern Europe (with the exception of East Germany), the Czechoslovak Communists took over an industrialized country, at least insofar as Bohemia and Moravia were concerned. Not even the disastrous application of doctrinaire planning nor the gross mismanagement of the economy after 1948 was able to destroy the industrial foundation of the country and the innate skill of the Czechoslovak worker.

After 1953 a certain measure of realism returned to the planning offices; the worst excesses of overcapitalization of industrial development were modified and some of the more impractical development projects abandoned. Since then the overall situation of the industrial economy has improved, despite notable weak spots such as coal and power production.

Lately the regime has followed the Soviet lead in introducing a measure of decentralization in industrial management. Czechoslovakia is, of course, too small a country to have adopted the system of regional administration now being tested in the Soviet Union. Instead, a fair degree of autonomy has been granted directly to individual enterprises, with increased overseeing functions ostensibly assigned to regional and district governmental authorities.

An attempt has also been made to raise labor production and productivity through various measures, including the shifting of thousands of bureaucrats from their office desks to the work-benches or down the mines, especially in the important border-area locations.[19] While the demand for greater labor efficiency may have been unpopular in some of its effects, it has been offset to some extent by a general rise in the population's real wages, accomplished despite continuing inflationary pressures.

There has also been more stress than in the past on consumer goods production—at least the party press, presumably with authorization, has been calling for a wider range of consumer products and has been urging Czechoslovak industry to catch up with the capitalist countries in the manufacture of such items as refrigerators and washing machines.[20] How much of any increment in consumption goods will reach the Czechoslovak population is another question, however, in view of Czechoslovakia's obligations to the USSR and its position in the bloc economy as a whole.

THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT that Moscow's all-out exploitation of the East European economies, which was one of the characteristic features of the Stalin era, is a thing of the past. Political pressures as well as the crippling effects of a one-sided economic drain apparently convinced the present Kremlin leaders that a more equitable form of economic relations was necessary within the bloc. But while substantial adjustments have been made in this respect, the interests of the individual satellite countries are still subordinated to the needs of the bloc economy as a whole and to the demands of Soviet foreign economic policy.

In this overall plan Czechoslovakia plays a crucial role. Her comparatively advanced industry has made her the spearhead of the Communist trade offensive in the Middle East and Southeast Asia. The aim of the offensive is, of course, to further Communist political penetration, and purely economic considerations must take second place. Thus Czechoslovakia's deliveries of arms to Egypt, for example, have gone forward without regard to their effect on her foreign trade balance. In Syria she not only has provided technical personnel for development work but has been responsible for supplying considerable exports, often without regard to world prices. Deliveries there and elsewhere are frequently made at a loss simply to give Moscow a foothold in the area, and the Czechoslovak economy has not been exempt from the effects of this imposed sacrifice.

Within the bloc, Czechoslovakia is relied upon for a variety of industrial and consumer goods; in particular, she is the main supplier for the bloc as a whole of such machinery as turbines, marine engines, agricultural machines (including special flax and sugar beet combines), generators, machines for the textile industry, locomotives, automobiles, trucks and buses.[21] The type of goods exchanged directly between Czechoslovakia and the USSR is indicated in their recent trade negotiations for the years 1959-65: Czechoslovakia is to supply electrical and diesel railway engines; equipment for the chemical, oil, consumer and food industries; leather footwear; clothing and knitwear; furniture and sugar. In return she is to receive grain and raw materials, including iron and manganese ores, crude oil, cotton, flax

[19] Despite the vigor of this drive, it would appear from complaints in the Czechoslovak press that no sooner are droves of office workers sent to the production line than others stream in to take their places.

[20] See, for example, *Rude Pravo,* March 31, 1958.

[21] UN Economic Survey of Europe in 1956, Geneva, February 1957

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fibers, and foodstuffs, as well as some machine tools.[22]

Constant efforts are made by the Novotny regime and its spokesmen to convince the Czechoslovak people that economic relations with the USSR and the other people's democracies are important and beneficial to the country. How much conviction these protestations carry is one of the imponderables of the Czechoslovak scene. In one respect, however, they are quite true: in the matter of bread grains Czechoslovakia is very largely dependent on the USSR, and this, of course, is a factor of great significance in cementing the ties that bind. According to official plan targets, Czechoslovakia will have to import grain at least until 1960, and a cut-off at that date presumes an interim increase of 30 percent in grain production.

Agriculture, as reflected by the grain situation, remains the most critical sector of the Czechoslovak economy, although here too there has been gradual improvement. As elsewhere in Eastern Europe, the precipitate collectivization program—begun earlier but pushed in earnest during 1952-53—met with reluctance on the part of the peasantry. However, in sharp contrast to some of the other countries—most notably Poland—the regime in Prague seems to have overcome or at least to have stifled completely any resistive tendencies. While there was a slight relaxation of the drive in the aftermath of the Twentieth CPSU Congress, at which time large numbers of peasants left the collectives, the official policy of socialization was not modified and for the past year has been pressed forward again with extreme pressure. The regime has, however, granted some minor concessions to the peasants in the form of reduced compulsory delivery quotas and higher prices for farm products; this combination of incentive and pressure has resulted in a rise in production which—while far from adequate to meet the nation's needs—makes the above-mentioned target for 1960 seem not too unreasonable.

The progress of the collectivization drive was underscored with statistics by Premier Siroky in a speech of last March 20 at Olomouc, the center of the Moravian fertile belt: he stated that the number of collective farms had risen from 28 in 1949 (with 7,028 hectares of land) to 11,350 today (with over 3,400,000 hectares); state farms and collectives now account for 72 percent of the total arable land in Bohemia and Moravia and 54.6 percent in Slovakia.[23]

[22] *Rude Pravo,* April 20, 1958.

Surplus Bureaucrat

A cartoonist pokes fun at the predicament of thousands of bureaucrats recently dismissed from jobs in the over-inflated government apparatus. Caption reads ". . . Would you need an organization supervisor?"

—From Dikobraz (Prague), March 20, 1958.

Resignation—The Prevailing Attitude

To sum up the situation in Czechoslovakia today, it can be generalized that political conditions and the methods of Communist government have remained essentially at a standstill since the Stalinist era, while economic conditions have improved to a noticeable extent. In juxtaposition, these two facts of the national life offer a basic clue to the relative stability which characterizes Czechoslovakia as a member of the Soviet camp, but they are by no means the whole story.

Considering first the viewpoint of the regime, both the Prague and the Moscow Communists have too much to lose to risk any weakening of their alliance. The Czech Communist leaders have no support in their own country comparable to that which buttressed Gomulka in Poland. They are in power by virtue of their forcible plot in 1948, by grace of the Kremlin and by default of any possible action on the part of the people. The rigidity of their regime proved to be a great asset to the Kremlin during the events of 1956, and now that the pendulum of Kremlin policy has swung back to a noticeable degree toward a reassertion of Stalinist principles, this rigidity must be fully acceptable to Moscow.

What, however, of the attitude of the Czechoslovak people? It cannot be claimed that they are happy with the present state of affairs; their living standard may be higher than that of other East European peoples, but in view of their country's relative wealth and fund of skill, it undoubtedly could be higher still in the absence of Kremlin economic impositions. Yet for the people, the

[23] *Ibid.,* March 21, 1958.

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removal of the worst sources of economic dissatisfaction has been enough to prevent revolt.

It would be foolish to underestimate the importance of this economic factor. Material privation was, after all, one of the aggravations which drove the people of Warsaw and Budapest into the streets. It is worth recalling that in 1953, when economic conditions in Czechoslovakia were very bad as the result of a severe currency reform, the workers staged a demonstration in Pilsen and other areas which presaged in almost every detail the events in Poznan three years later. Inevitably the improvement in the lot of the Czech population has dulled the acuity of popular discontent.

Yet there are other and deeper reasons for popular passivity than the obvious economic explanation. Although the Czechs are generally regarded as a realistic people, with a tradition of passive resistance rather than heroic revolt, history has proved this conception to be untrue: there were times when they held the whole of Europe at bay. Even the Slovaks, who are said to be more romantic and more prone to adopt lost causes, remained quiet in 1956. Why?

In the first place, the continued reign of Stalinism in Czechoslovakia has afforded little opportunity for the formation of pressures toward revolt. There was no group or even individual in Czechoslovakia, who like Gomulka in Poland, could have provided a link between the discontented intellectuals and the workers. There was not even a rallying point, which the hapless Nagy provided in Hungary. There was only an efficient police force, a party leadership which despite Czech-Slovak differences—and through the process of purge—was essentially well-integrated, a potentially rebellious but small student body, a few discontented writers and the apathetic mass of people.

In the second place, a rising on the grounds of national sympathy for the Hungarians and Poles could not have been expected, at least among the Czech majority. There is no tradition of affinity between the Czechs and either of these peoples, and no doubt there are those who still recall that both the Polish and Hungarian governments of the day had the support of their people when they aided Hitler in dismembering Czechoslovakia.

A closely connected factor—the lesson of Munich—probably contributed strongly to the prevention of a sympathetic outbreak. Once burned, twice shy, the saying goes, and the Munich agreement of 1938 was perhaps the worst burning the Czech nation has endured in the course of its not uneventful history. To the Czechs, Munich demonstrated that the western world was not prepared to risk all-out war to back their independence. Whatever the arguments for or against western military intervention then or in 1956, the reluctance of the Czech people to risk an uprising is understandable in the light of their past experience.

There is another factor which must be taken into account. Czechoslovakia does not share the traditional, deeply-ingrained enmity toward Russia which exists in Poland and Hungary as a result of historical experience. On the other hand, for all Western Slavs, the spectre of Germany looms forever large. In Poland, Gomulka's success in containing anti-Soviet sentiment has been partly due to his constant references to the German danger. For Czech citizens, the issue is clear: alliance with Russia—whatever hardships it has brought—affords protection against a renewed *Drang nach Osten;* regardless of the political leanings or policies pursued by any German government, this is what they believe. If their present political status leaves much to be desired, it is still preferable to that which obtained in 1938-45—a point which is constantly made in regime propaganda.

To sum up, there are two levels of feeling in Czechoslovakia toward the ties with Russia. The first is that of the Communists, whose political life depends on maintaining their link with Moscow, and who have most recently expressed their loyalty by taking the lead in the new campaign against Yugoslav revisionism. Their task of perpetuating popular compliance is made easier as economic conditions improve, and if they could only recognize it, would probably become easier still if they were to relax their senseless police terror.

The second level of feeling is that of the people, which is conditioned by emotional factors deep in the national consciousness. Munich will remain a watchword for many a generation of Czechs: their fear of Germany and their reservations concerning Western reliability may be based on misconceptions, but the sentiment is real all the same. It is this which accounts for their ambivalent attitude toward Moscow—a mixed emotion of revulsion against the tyrant and reliance on the protector. Their desire for cultural and other contacts with the West is unlikely to have any substantial effect on this attitude.

Postwar Czech-Soviet relations thus represent a love-hate situation which is probably unique in the history of nations. The Czechs present the pathetic picture of a people who would have liked to be friends with their wartime liberators to the East, had they only been given the opportunity. Soviet policies after 1944 and, above all, the Communist *coup d'état* in 1948 destroyed that chance. All that remains are bitter memories of the past, grudging passivity and little hope for the future.

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Cultural Decline under the Soviets

Nikolai A. Gorchakov, *The Theater in Soviet Russia:* Columbia Univ. Press, N. Y., 1957.
Andrei Olkhovsky, *Music under the Soviets:* F. A. Praeger, N. Y., 1955.
Paul Babitsky and John Rimberg, *The Soviet Film Industry:* F. A. Praeger, N. Y., 1955.
Peter Yershov, *Comedy in the Soviet Theater:* F. A. Praeger, N. Y., 1956.
Martha Bradshaw, Ed., *Soviet Theaters, 1917-1941:* Research Program on the USSR, N. Y., 1954.

Reviewed by Paul Willen

THE VIRTUAL ELIMINATION of the Soviet Union from the growth and development of contemporary world culture has become an accepted fact in the cultural centers of the non-Soviet world. It is attested to by the lack of interest in Soviet cultural output among serious artists, as well as by the disappearance, over the past 25 years, of Soviet representation in museums, exhibitions, and international competitions. With rare exceptions, the literary production of the Soviet Union is not translated into foreign tongues; its dramas have not merited inclusion in the repertoire of non-Soviet theatrical companies; its contemporary poets are unknown; its architects are virtually anonymous and without influence; its theatrical directors are largely unrecognized; and its films, although occasionally recipients of international awards, rarely are objects of popular acclaim. Only in the realm of music do a number of Soviet figures still command widespread respect.

This cultural poverty is certainly astonishing for a nation of such great political import as the USSR; the record is all the more striking if contrasted with the tremendous contributions made to world culture by Russia in the first quarter of this century, when it constituted one of the major forces of progress and inspiration in the arts, ranking with France, England and Germany

A frequent contributor to these pages, Mr. Willen has combined his two major interests—the USSR and architecture—by producing a full-length study of Soviet architecture, from which two articles were drawn for this journal (November-December 1953 and July-August 1956).

The five books under review attempt to describe and to some extent analyze the complex process which accounts for this transformation from creative vigor to unprecedented cultural stagnation in Russia. Three of them deal with drama, the other two with music and the film industry; each tells a similar story, describing the richness and fluidity of the 1920's, the gradual imposition of direct governmental authority over the arts between 1927 and 1933, and the consequent impoverization of artistic output which followed in the 1930's and thereafter. The complex mechanics of this transformation—arising out of the victory of the Stalinist wing of bolshevism and the impact of the first Five-Year Plan—are not taken up in the books under review; that difficult task is left to the historian. Rather they describe the cultural products themselves, providing data and impressions on which the historian may draw.

THE MOST VALUABLE of these volumes is Gorchakov's *The Theater in the Soviet Union,* both because it is the most scholarly work, and because it begins not with the 1917 revolution but rather with the founding of the modern Russian theater at the turn of the century —a development which exercised a great influence not only in Russia but throughout the West. This new theater, distinguished by its emphasis on psychological realism, was primarily the product of the gigantic talent of Konstantin Stanislavsky, and to a lesser degree, of his coworker, Nemirovich-Danchenko. Perhaps more than any other man, Stanislavsky was responsible for the transformation of the theater from a showplace of melodramatic "emotions" into a realistic demonstration of

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inner human experience. Under his leadership the stuffy cliches of nineteenth century theatrical decor were replaced by an intense naturalism of setting, enhancing the portrayal of realistic human experience. The director became a dynamic figure in the preparation of a dramatic production, no longer merely explaining the setting of a play to the actors, but analyzing the characters in such a way that the actors could, as it were, live the parts.

Prior to these great innovators, the stage portrayal of human emotion relied on custom-established stereotypes. An actor showed love, for example, by holding his hand to his heart and making his voice grieve sweetly (as Gorchakov describes it); terror he exhibited by rolling his eyes and staggering backwards. Never did the emotion seem to penetrate or emanate from the actor himself. Stanislavsky attempted to infuse the total emotional reality of a role into his own actors (one of his most quoted expressions was, "when you play the part of a scoundrel, always keep in mind his good qualities"), and on the basis of his teachings the famed Moscow Art Theater achieved international renown.

As in most revolutionary ages, the giants came not alone but in numbers. In addition to Stanislavsky there emerged a half-dozen unusually gifted and dynamic directors, including Tairov, Vakhtangov, Meyerhold, each with his own interpretation of the new dazzling twentieth-century "reality." Meyerhold, whose approach was diametrically opposed to Stanislavsky's, was perhaps the most extraordinary of these figures.

Disdaining Stanislavsky's careful psychological realism, Meyerhold concentrated his interest on new forms of theatrical presentation, in which the actor was an essentially subordinate factor. These new forms stressed brilliant symbolic settings, highly stylized costumes and masks, elaborate pantomime set to a harsh new music, bold dramatic gestures breaking across a vastly enlarged stage. In Meyerhold's hands the theater became a powerful spectacle, a festival of significant forms, a brilliant masquerade created with great craftsmanship.

FAR FROM CURBING these developments, the 1917 revolution provided the opportunity for their greatest expression. This was due not to specific Bolshevik design (indeed, cultural experimentation made the Soviet leaders uneasy from the very start) but rather to the emotional and physical chaos which followed the revolution. It was a period of intense, emotional experience for the entire country; life itself was a drama—and the theater was the natural medium for communicating the feelings of the time. Gorchakov writes:

It was a terrible world, woven of frost, spoiled herring, patched rags, typhus, arrests, queues, and armed soldiers. Yet, in this world there was premiere after premiere.

The stages were icy and drafty; the frosty props were in the corners. Yet ballets were danced . . . as they had never been danced before. The salaries of the performers were almost nil, but never did a single curtain go up late.

Gorchakov relates that a "theater epidemic" seized Russia after the revolution, spreading to all sectors of the populace. Every army unit, cultural circle, and school had its own flourishing dramatic group. This enthusiastic activity, he says, was carried on ". . . not for bolshevism but rather for the welfare of the people of Russia who had for the first time burst into the theater auditoriums."

With the stabilization of the national life brought about by Lenin's New Economic Policy in the 1920's the theater "epidemic" subsided somewhat. But on the professional level, the great exuberance of the post-revolutionary period, combined with the genius of the prerevolutionary directors, gave birth to a theatrical life of extraordinary splendor:

The great period of innovation and creativity in the Soviet theater began approximately in 1921 and lasted until about 1929 or 1930. It was unparalleled in the history of the international stage. Its lavishness and luxury were almost fabulous, and its schools and techniques not only enriched the Soviet theater but benefited the theaters of many other peoples as well.[1]

Gorchakov emphasizes the point that this cultural triumph of the 1920's belongs primarily to the history of Russia rather than to the history of communism. The revolution may have been a stimulus to some of the innovators (particularly Meyerhold), but the innovations themselves clearly antedate the revolution. Meyerhold and the great poet-playwright Mayakovsky may have considered their contributions the "theatrical October", as they themselves proudly boasted; but the subsequent destruction of all their finest work in the 1930's clearly showed that bolshevism was not pointed in the creative direction which these men envisioned.

Gorchakov retells, in some detail, the story of the offensive unleashed by the regime after 1927 against the so-called "formalist" schools which had made the Russian theater so outstanding. This story follows the familiar pattern of increasing control from the center, imposed through complex organizational mechanics, and climaxed by the launching of the era of "socialist realism" in all the arts after 1932.

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[1] It is interesting to note that this period of Russian theater had a pronounced influence on the generation of American directors who arose in the mid-1930's and are today the top men in their fields.

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The Theater in Soviet Russia is written with a fine and rare combination of first-rate scholarship and the author's warm personal feeling for the stage; it deserves a permanent place in that small library of good histories of Soviet life. The other volumes are not of equal quality, but are valuable primarily for the materials and facts which they assemble. Olkhovsky's *Music Under the Soviets* discusses the enormous musical heritage of Soviet Russia—the work of such greats as Mussorsky, Tchaikowsky, Rachmaninov, Stravinsky, *etc.*—and then describes the manner in which this heritage was first permitted to flower and later harshly circumscribed under Soviet regulation.

THE ATTEMPTS to impose a definite pattern on Soviet music, marked by Stalin's 1936 attack on Shostakovich and Zhdanov's 1948 attack on the entire profession (only recently "repealed"), are carefully recorded. It is clear from Olkhovsky's account, however, that despite concerted efforts, including even the brutal 1948 onslaught, the Soviet regime has not been as successful in taming music as in disciplining the other arts. The very fact that certain composers are identified in the West with distinct musical styles affords a sharp contrast to the anonymity which generally marks the work of Soviet artists in other fields.

To be sure, certain "radical" modern musical currents have been cut off, depriving Russia of the pioneering role which it occupied in music, as in the theatrical arts, during the first quarter of the century. But because music is an abstract art—and because, like mathematics, it proved a difficult medium for which to define and apply "socialist realism"—the authorities were unable to chain it completely to the Stalinist doctrine of "comprehensibility" without reducing it to the level of mere song-writing, which they apparently were unwilling to do. In this respect, they may have felt that the possible harm which relatively "decadent" music could work upon popular morale was not sufficient to justify the silencing of men who lent such prestige to the Soviet Union. None of the important Soviet composers has been purged; indeed Prokofiev was tolerated in spite of his well-known lack of concern for the ideological subtleties of Stalinist doctrine. Apparently "subversion" was deemed to be less obvious in music than in literature or the theater—hence much defiance or indifference, though by no means all, was forgiven.

The Soviet Film Industry by Babitsky and Rimberg fits cinematic history into the same unhappy pattern traceable in other cultural fields. Rimberg's essay on the central administration of the industry describes the usual proliferation of overlapping agencies in the 1920's, and the steps taken between 1927 and 1933 to bring these agencies into one centralized organization headed by a certain Shumyatsky (who was purged in 1937 in reward for his efforts). Babitsky's interesting essay on cinema production describes the early wealth of talent which, in spite of much government interference, produced some fine films in the 1920's. It proceeds to show how this talent was so thoroughly subjugated in the 1930's that the Soviet film industry, once a flourishing concern, came to a virtual standstill after World War II (from which crisis it is only now recovering). This complete breakdown of film production provides one of the most incisive demonstrations of the decline of Soviet culture. If a novel could not be published without the approval of three separate censorial organizations, it is not difficult to believe that a film—embracing many different artistic disciplines—required such an elaborate system of governmental controls that each finished production was a major triumph of the industry.

The value of Yershov's book, *Comedy in the Soviet Theater*, is in its inclusion of the synopses of several dozen Soviet plays, reflecting the progressive deterioration of Soviet drama and the fluctuating demands of Soviet social policy. A high point in this history-by-example is the section devoted to Mayakovsky's two great diatribes against the Soviet bureaucracy, *The Bedbug* (1928) and *The Bathhouse* (1929). These plays, one of which was directed by Meyerhold, presumably contributed to the psychological-political crisis which culminated in Mayakovsky's suicide in 1930. His assessment of the achievements of Soviet rule is memorable:

> **Who rode in the streetcars before the revolution? Declasse intellectuals, priests and the gentry. How much did they pay? Five kopeks. What did they ride in? A yellow streetcar.**
>
> **And who will ride in the streetcars now? We, the workers of the world. How will we ride? In a red streetcar. For how much? For only ten kopeks.**

PERHAPS MOST NOTABLE in the collection of studies on *Soviet Theaters* is an essay by Serge Orlovsky, which bears a capsuled resemblance to Gorchakov's excellent book; its scope is inevitably smaller and its scholarship more limited, but the sense of the lively pre-Stalinist theatrical life is still admirably conveyed. The author recalls the tremendous furor created by Meyerhold's production of Gogol's *The Inspector-General* in 1925. Meyerhold, whose mind transformed everything it touched, completely revised this Russian classic, placing its action in St. Petersburg rather than in a provincial capital, borrowing characters from other Gogol works, saturating the play with music, and as a final touch, re-

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placing the actors with dolls in the last scene. The production was greeted with enthusiasm on one hand, dismay on the other; but the world of theater was at least keenly interested. It was precisely this quality of keen interest which was of course so completely absent from the plays of the following era.

IN THE YEARS since Stalin's death, it has seemed to many that the era of cultural barrenness in Soviet Russia, encompassing more than two decades, was coming to an end. It is certainly true that, for a while at least, a breath of fresh air was felt in many fields. A number of vigorous protests were voiced against Stalinist cultural dictatorship, including Ehrenburg's much discussed *The Thaw* and Dudintsev's *Not by Bread Alone*. However, it is a measure of the thoroughness with which genuine culture was destroyed in the previous era that none of the post-Stalin protests assumed the form of genuine art. That is to say, they employed the forms of "socialist realism" in the very act of criticizing it; and though both the above-mentioned books were republished in the West, their great interest lay chiefly in their political significance rather than in their intrinsic artistic merit.

Indeed, it is questionable whether the Soviet leadership could restore the cultural richness of the first quarter of this century, even if it chose to free the arts entirely of the ideological straitjacket which has long confined them. The great theater which Gorchakov describes in his book evolved slowly over many decades, gradually accumulating experience and testing its methods and its discoveries, and finally producing figures of the magnitude of Stanislavsky and Meyerhold.

Looking back over the years the names of these two giants stand out, partly because they were men of such unusual mental strength and genius, and partly because in the very sharpness of their own personal differences they captured the peculiar richness of the epoch they dominated. Stanislavsky was an inspired but careful technician of the acting profession, closer perhaps, in the sense of his painstaking refinement, to pre-revolutionary Russia. Meyerhold, by contrast, was a brilliant director of the spectacle of colorful forces which his imaginative mind put on the stage; in this talent he showed greater affinity for the post-revolutionary generation, which had experienced the intense and frequently cruel emotions erupting in the aftermath of 1917.

Stanislavsky fought a quiet battle in the 1930's to resist the demands of "socialist realism," but was forced to yield in some degree in the years before his death in 1938. For this reason, and also because of the surface mildness of his acting principles, he has become a revered figure in the official Soviet pantheon of theatrical heroes; even today his methods seem to be reflected, if palely, in the polished performances of the Moscow Art Theater.

Meyerhold, on the other hand, was a man of such great passion and conviction that he could not bring himself to conform to Stalinist dictate in any measure. His last speech, before a congress of directors in Moscow in June 1939, only one year after the great purges had been completed, was one of the boldest statements of artistic and human integrity ever uttered publicly in the Soviet Union. Under attack, Meyerhold acknowledged that he had been mistaken in some matters. But, he asked:

. . . Has a master really no right to experiment? Has he really no moral right to check his creative ideas—even if they be mistaken—through experiments?

Growing bolder as he elaborated on this theme, he spoke caustically of the official struggle against "formalism," and then capped his speech with an eloquent and decisive statement of the artistic principles which had formed the substance of his life:

If what you have been doing with the Soviet theater recently is anti-formalism . . . then I would prefer to be what you consider a "formalist". . . . The pitiful and wretched thing that pretends to the title of the theater of socialist realism has nothing in common with art. . . .

But the theater is art! And without art, there is no theater! Go visit the theaters of Moscow. Look at their drab and boring presentations that resemble one another and are each worse than the others. . . . Recently creative ideas poured from them. People in the arts searched, erred, and frequently stumbled and turned aside, but they really created—sometimes badly and sometimes splendidly. Where once there were the best theaters in the world, now—by your leave—everything is gloomily well-regulated, averagely arithmetical, stupefying, and murderous in its lack of talent.

Is that your aim? If it is—oh!—you have done something monstrous! In hunting down formalism, you have eliminated art!

The day following this astonishing speech Meyerhold was arrested, never again to return to freedom. There should be little wonder at this; the system which had strangled art itself would not—indeed could not—have stopped at strangling one protestant voice, especially the voice of a man who personified the cardinal sin of creative individuality.

Meyerhold's blunt statement makes most of the post-Stalin protests against Soviet cultural policy seem pale by comparison. Whether the Soviet system has successfully channeled his sort of boldness into the race for the moon, or whether it will ever again erupt on the Russian stage, remains a moot question for the future.

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Arms and Doctrine

Raymond L. Garthoff:
Soviet Strategy in the Nuclear Age
F. A. Praeger, Inc.,
New York, 1958.

Reviewed by Denis Healey

FOR THE LAST HUNDRED years the great powers have based their defense policies on an estimate of their potential enemy's military capacity rather than his intentions, on the reasonable grounds that the latter are more difficult to discover, and may change in any case. Thus when two great powers are in conflict, their hostility is expressed in a race for superiority in armaments. Today the search for an overall superiority in military power, besides posing almost insoluble problems through the rapid obsolescence and enormous cost of modern weapons, is beginning to lose all sense. The long range thermonuclear missile will soon be operationally available to at least three great powers, and unless special steps are taken to prevent it, will be in the possession of a score of smaller nations within about ten years. A few dozen of such missiles would suffice to inflict crippling damage on even the greatest powers, and there is not yet any foreseeable means of destroying them either on the ground or in flight.

Providing, therefore, that both powers in a conflict possess the necessary minimum of this invulnerable striking power, neither can hope to win an arms race against the other in any sense which is politically meaningful at the level of total war. Since superior power no longer provides a guarantee of security, a modern defense policy must take the enemy's political intentions into account no less than his physical capacity. At the present time the Western governments probably know all that it is necessary to know about the forces and weapons available to the Soviet Union. They are much less clear about the political intentions of the government which controls these forces—and so far as they are clear, they disagree.

Mr. Garthoff's new book is a useful contribution to an understanding of the role of military force in Soviet policy, but it could be misleading to the careless reader. It provides as full a picture of Soviet military capacity as allied intelligence will permit. But, despite its title, its picture of the doctrinal principles which guide the use of this capacity is deliberately limited. It is concerned primarily with the way in which the Soviet military leaders have used the greater intellectual freedom allowed them under Khrushchev to adapt their professional doctrine to a situation in which Russia's main enemy of the United States and science offers them a choice of weapons infinite both in range and destructive power.

MILITARY DOCTRINE SUFFERED as badly as any other field of Soviet thinking from the Stalinist straitjacket. To take one example, "not a single article on atomic energy or atomic weapons is known to have appeared in the period from 1947 through 1953 in the Soviet military and daily periodical press." After Stalin's death the army became Khrushchev's closest ally in the Kremlin struggle for power because it opposed Malenkov's desire to cut military expenditure. Zhukov got Khrushchev to agree that there was a specific "military science" concerned with the technique of waging war, which could be separated from the political (*i.e.*, party) question of the role of war in policy. It is exclusively on these technical issues that the military are now allowed to build their own doctrine. But it would be an error to believe that the new doctrine now emerging from the pages of the professional journals gives much clue to the strategic intentions of the Soviet

Mr. Healey, who contributed "Bulganin and Khrushchev in Britain" to the July-August 1956 issue of this journal, is a Member of Parliament, former Secretary of the British Labour Party's International Department, and well-known analyst of foreign affairs. In recent months he has become an active proponent of "disengagement" in Central Europe.

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political leaders. On the contrary, it may well be held that by separating the technical from the political aspects of defense the Soviets risk losing that integrated approach to force as a means of policy which has in the past been their peculiar strength.

Mr. Garthoff's book unconsciously reflects the Soviet dilemma. Time and again he finds official military statements on Soviet strategy so much at variance both with Soviet capacity and Soviet conduct that he has to reject them as deliberately misleading—although, as he points out in his useful chapter on source materials, there is no difference between the doctrine as stated in journals which are publicly circulated and that in available copies of confidential periodicals like *Military Thought*. For example, Soviet doctrine denies the possibility of limited or local war, although, as Mr. Garthoff points out, the USSR has succeeded in keeping all postwar military conflicts limited and local. In fact Russia's capacity for waging a limited and local war is so much greater than the West's that she has every interest in initiating one—or at least in establishing its feasibility. Yet try as he might, Mr. Garthoff has the greatest difficulty in unearthing one single ambiguous quotation which suggests the possibility of limited war, as against a hundred clear major statements which reject it.

SO FAR AS Mr. Garthoff sticks to the rules of evidence he sets himself, the picture of Soviet military doctrine he presents is very different from that assumed by most current Western writers on the problem. The prime task of the Soviet armed forces, as he interprets it, is to win a world war—after the initial exchange of thermonuclear blows—by occupying Western Europe and the Middle East. Since the purpose of this occupation is to tilt the balance of world power decisively in the USSR's favor, the Soviet forces will operate as far as possible only against the enemy military forces. "Strategic" attack on enemy populations is specifically discouraged. The Soviet military still see war in the traditional Russian way as a land campaign against adjacent territory. The fact that the main threat now comes from American air power is not fully accounted for. The role of the Soviet air force is still primarily to support the Soviet army and to attack military targets in the enemy's rear. It is significant that the air force is still denied leaders of the highest rank—it has no Marshals of the Soviet Union. Similarly the main role of the enormous submarine fleet is not to attack the United States itself but to cut off the NATO forces in Europe from their main sources of supply overseas.

Because the role of the Soviet forces is seen almost exclusively in terms of action against a major attack by enemy armed forces, the concept of deterrence, in the sense in which it dominates Western strategy, plays almost no part in Soviet military doctrine except where long-range missiles are concerned—and even here Mr. Garthoff can produce no evidence of the deterrent role except in political speeches by Khrushchev himself. Although Soviet forces are now fully trained for various types of limited war, the latter, as already noted, is simply not accounted for in the doctrine itself.

OF COURSE Mr. Garthoff is perfectly justified in speculating about Russia's intentions on the basis of her capacity rather than of statements in her service journals. But such speculation must also take into account the political framework of Soviet strategy as Mr. Garthoff himself describes it—*e.g.:*

Both the ideology and practice of communism require that the drive (towards world domination) be carefully calculated in terms of costs and opportunities. . . . It opposes very strongly any measure smacking of "adventurism" or taking inadmissible risks. . . . Soviet policy probably envisages a long and continued avoidance of war, seeking to expand its influence and control by political measures [which] offer considerable promise at much less risk than resort to arms, even in local wars.

This is surely the key to any understanding of the role of armed force in Soviet policy. For in calculating the risks of military action, Khrushchev—no less than the West in the reverse situation—has to base his decision on what he knows of his enemy's capacity and intentions. He knows that the United States has the power to inflict damage on the Soviet Union out of all proportion to the gain from any conceivable war; and he knows that it is the stated intention of the American leaders to respond to any major attack by inflicting such damage. He may, like many Western observers, have doubts about America's readiness to pay the price of implementing these threats in cases of minor aggression. But doubt over the likelihood of retaliation is scarcely apt to seem sufficient justification for deliberately incurring the risk of destruction. That is why—as Henry Kissinger argued, and then forgot, in his *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*—any Soviet military challenge is likely to be presented in such an ambiguous way that a Western military response is both politically inadvisable and strategically futile. Korea is the exception which proves the rule, since here the USSR instigated action only after the total evacuation of American troops and after *ex cathedra* statements by both the

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American Secretary of State and the Supreme Commander in the Pacific that Korea was no longer within the scope of America's strategic interests. The fact that despite these statements Truman immediately intervened to halt Communist aggression will make the Kremlin doubly cautious about taking such risks in future.

This is not to deny that the West would be wise to increase the range of its strategic options by providing more balanced forces. But to the extent that America's new vulnerability to Soviet thermonuclear attack robs the alliance of the protection of the Strategic Air Command, the gap in Western defense can be closed as easily by giving America's peripheral allies some thermonuclear striking power of their own as by producing collective alternatives to suicide through an allied strategy for limited war. So far the West has preferred the former course, even though, in the present writer's opinion, this is likely to lead in time to the disintegration of the alliance, which will then bring greater risks than security to most of its members.

WHAT STRIKES ONE MOST about Mr. Garthoff's book is that the evidence he presents suggests a different conclusion from the one he draws himself. The Soviet military have not in fact succeeded in adapting their doctrine to the realities of the nuclear age, because the party still imposes severe restrictions on their intellectual freedom. The conceptual framework within which the professional strategists are compelled to work is quite inappropriate both to the size and nature of the Soviet armed forces and even more to the known capacity and doctrine of the USSR's only serious opponent in global war. For example, the Soviet image of American military strategy is ludicrously at variance with facts which are common knowledge to anyone who can read English; for the Russian military experts are not allowed to admit the concept of a deterrent strategy, though this is absolutely fundamental in current Western orthodoxy.

There is in fact an inherent contradiction between Soviet military doctrine, Soviet military capacity, and Soviet political doctrine. Mr. Garthoff shows clearly enough that since Zhukov's dismissal the party has succeeded in establishing complete control over the armed forces at every level except the budgetary. It looks as if the terms of the present concordat allow the military leadership to have the size and type of forces it wants only on condition that their employment remains totally under party direction. The doctrinal strait-jacket is one of Khrushchev's safeguards against military "adventurism". But it is difficult to believe that he will allow his generals much longer to levy such an enormous tribute from the Soviet economy; some of his recent *obiter dicta* suggest a contempt for traditional military thinking which is likely to be expressed in policy as soon as he feels strong enough to risk a showdown.

The one factor which may ultimately save the generals is that their organization and doctrine, however unsuitable for conflict with the United States, may be exactly what is needed for a situation in which the main enemy becomes China, with her colossal land armies standing on Russia's Eastern frontier. Nearly everything in Mr. Garthoff's book which makes nonsense in the context of the current cold war would then make impressive good sense.

IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES:

Marxism in Retrospect—*Essays by Bertram D. Wolfe and George Lichtheim*
The Soviet Terror Apparatus: Current Trends and Portents, *by Wolfgang Leonhard*
Soviet Education in Flux, *by Nicholas DeWitt*
Peiping and Moscow: New Phase?, *by G. F. Hudson*
Communism in Indonesia: A Brief Survey, *by Martin Ebon*

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Moscow, Peiping and the Middle East

EDITORS' NOTE: Future issues of *Problems of Communism* will carry detailed analyses of the background and significance of current Soviet and Communist policies in the Middle East. In the meantime, we present two brief reports bearing on recent developments in that area. The first discusses Sino-Soviet strategy with regard to the abortive "summit meeting" on the Middle East. It demonstrates that, contrary to prevailing opinion at the time, the line in Moscow and Peiping was perfectly well coordinated; it also points to the probability that Peiping followed Moscow's course, rather than *vice versa.* The second article offers an instructive historical note on past Soviet designs in the Middle East. As the author points out, Soviet imperialistic claims on that area—in many respects recalling the policies of the Tsarist regime—had their origin twenty years ago, when the USSR and Nazi Germany were secretly negotiating a division of what was to be a Nazi-and-Communist-controlled world.

Sino-Soviet Relations and the Summit

AMONG THE MANY dramatic developments of the current Mid-East crisis, one of the most interesting—from the point of view of Communist bloc relations—was Khrushchev's surprise visit to Peiping in early August, following which he renounced his prior agreement to a discussion of the crisis in a special session of the UN Security Council and proposed instead a special session of the General Assembly. This move has been widely interpreted in the Western press as a tactical reversal forced upon the Kremlin leader by Mao Tse-tung, whose alleged objections to the former plan centered mainly on Nationalist China's permanent representation in the Security Council. In the present writer's view, however, this line of analysis—with its implication of Mao's power to enforce his viewpoint on Moscow—is unwarranted; as a number of quotations from the Chinese and Soviet press will demonstrate, the Mao regime has unquestioningly parroted the Moscow line on every phase of Khrushchev's maneuvers, including the period when he seemed agreeable to a Security Council special session.

The proposal for the latter meeting-ground was first put forward by British Prime Minister Macmillan on July 21 and formalized in UK and US notes of July 22. Khrushchev's agreement was announced on July 23, but not until mid-evening, Moscow time. Earlier in the day, both the Chinese and the Soviet press carried comment hostile to the plan, raising almost identical objections. A New China News Agency (hereafter NCNA) dispatch from London, released the 23rd though dated the 22nd, declared:

> **The (British) proposal consists of a multitude of pitfalls and loopholes for the USA and Britain to use to deny the purpose of a summit conference. Instead of the seriously composed summit conference as proposed by the Soviet Union, the British planned that the "special meetings" would consist mainly of Security Council members. Most of the present Security Council members are American-controlled, including the Kuomintang man who represents nobody except the moribund Chiang Kai-shek and the delegate of the former Iraqi regime who represents the dead King Faisal . . .**

On the morning of July 23rd *Izvestia* used the same arguments, with the United States as its particular target:

> **Everyone knows that the USA can rely in the Security Council on a mechanical majority, and does the USA seriously imagine that anyone could agree to discuss important international problems with Chiang Kai-shek who, by the grace of his US patrons, occupies a seat in the Security Council?**

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Khrushchev's qualified acceptance of Mr. Macmillan's terms—specifically, for a "special meeting of the Security Council . . . [at which] no resolutions should be adopted unless there was previous agreement"—together with his proposal that the meeting take place July 28th, was broadcast on Radio Moscow at 8:00 pm of the 23rd and printed in *Pravda* the next day. The new Soviet position was greeted just as enthusiastically in Peiping as in Moscow. Although the announcement came too late to make the Chinese papers on the 24th because of the time difference, NCNA that evening transmitted the *Jen-min jih-pao* (People's Daily) lead editorial for the following day, which hailed Khrushchev's response as a "major step for peace [on the part of] the Soviet Union, a loyal friend of the Middle East people and great pillar of world peace." The editorial continued:

In their respective replies to Chairman Khrushchev on July 22 the heads of the United States and British governments did all they could to turn the facts upside down in defending their aggression in the Middle East. But under the pressure of the public demand for peace, they had to express their willingness to attend a sumit meeting within the framework of the UN Security Council. It is obvious that the proposal of the Soviet government proceeds from the urgent need and desire to check aggression and maintain peace. The people of the world who cherish peace welcome and support this proposal. They hope that on the basis of the Soviet proposal, a special security council meeting with the participation of the heads of five powers can be held as soon as possible.

Unequivocal Chinese support for the special Security Council meeting continued over the next two days (July 26 and 27). *Jen-min jih-pao* and other papers carried glowing reports of the welcome accorded to Khrushchev's position in other countries and continued their elaborate praise of the Soviet effort to preserve peace. The need for a speedy convocation of the meeting was stressed in a July 27th NCNA advance summary of a *Kwang-ming jih-pao* (July 28th) editorial entitled "No Delays":

[The paper] warned against "double dealing and sudden moves by the imperialists in connection with the summit conference," saying that these must be dealt resolute blows. Although the USA has been forced under the pressure of world opinion to agree to a special conference, "this does not mean that the USA has given up its aggressive designs. . . ." Noting that the American press has disclosed that the USA was planning to create obstructions on the questions of the date, participants and agenda of the conference, the paper said: "The world must be warned against this, and all forces of peace mobilized to prevent US-British sabotage of the conference."

KHRUSHCHEV'S NEXT policy statement to the Western governments was contained in letters of July 28, published in *Pravda* July 29. The Soviet leader accused Prime Minister Macmillan, in particular, of having—in his communication of July 26th—changed his previous position with regard to conditions for the special meeting of the Security Council. Khrushchev continued to profess a desire for the special session, but condemned as a "step backward" the US' idea that permanent Council members should discuss and set the date for the session as a "regular" meeting. To this he added:

The Security Council, as the experience of its latest meeting has shown, is not able to take an urgent and effective decision at an ordinary session.

Khrushchev's clear rejection of the alleged changes in Macmillan's view was concentrated in the following paragraph:

It can be said that your July 22nd proposal concerning a conference of the heads of government within the framework of the Security Council could have produced a proper effect had it been carried into life. But the point is that you are going back on this proposal, and we are getting the impression that you are trying to find a pretext for discussions on procedure as a screen to cover up a further expansion of aggression. One cannot help noticing that the course is thus set toward burying the agreement reached on an early meeting of the heads of government of the USSR, the UK, the USA, France and India within the framework of the Security Council. We cannot accept this.

The propaganda line laid down by Moscow as guidance for all interpretations of the Khrushchev letters may be seen from a Tass agency commentary of July 29:

The correspondence between the heads of government of the Western powers and the government of the USSR has been published in full in the West and in the USSR, and all who can read could see well enough what is taking place. This is what has taken place. No sooner had the Soviet Union agreed to the US and British proposal on the convocation of a special session of the Security Council with the participation of the heads of government, than President Eisenhower and Prime Minister Macmillan, this time with stunning haste, renounced their own positions taken up on July 22 and openly took the course of thwarting the agreement already reached on an early meeting of the heads of the five powers. In place of such a meeting, they propose to hand over the question of the situation in the Near East to an ordinary meeting of the Security Council where, relying on their mechanical majority, they have already undermined the adoption of any positive decisions aiming at the suspension of the military conflict which has begun. Confirmation has thus been given to the warnings of many Western observers that the positive attitude of the USA and Britain on July 22 was only a maneuver undertaken in the hope that the Soviet Union would reject the proposal for the convocation of a heads-of-government conference within the framework of the Security Council.

The response in Peiping was this time perfectly coordinated. An NCNA summary of the Peiping press of

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July 30 noted that all city newspapers had "front-paged" Khrushchev's letters, and went on to summarize their content in terms strikingly similar to the Moscow line:

The letters note that under world pressure Macmillan had grudgingly declared his willingness to go to a summit meeting within the framework of the United Nations Security Council, while Eisenhower had said that if a summit meeting were desired by all, the United States would join in. When the Soviet Government agreed, Eisenhower and Macmillan at once changed their minds and proposed that the summit meeting should be arranged by the permanent representatives of the various nations on the Security Council. This in fact scraps the agreement reached by the heads of state in their correspondence and was designed to bog down the actual holding of the conference in a quagmire of procedural issues. The US and British governments resorted to these tactics of sabotage because their leaders, especially Eisenhower, fear that they will appear in the indefensible position of aggressors at the summit conference. They fear that their aggression will inevitably be opposed and checked. This was already pointed out in the American and British press as well the papers of other Western countries.

Among direct quotations in the same press review was the following passage from a *Ta Kung Pao* editorial:

It is necessary to warn the American and British aggressors again that they have no way out except to withdraw from Lebanon and Jordan and to accept the Soviet proposal for an immediate summit conference; expansion of aggression and war would mean certain demise for them.

Kwang-ming jih-pao contributed another variation of the same theme in charging:

. . . the American and British imperialists are criminals of aggression in the eyes of the people throughout the world. They cannot change this indictment or escape condemnation by delaying or obstructing the summit conference.

TO SUM UP THE POINT of the above compilation, it should be clear that in the week of July 23-30, preceding Khrushchev's trip to Peiping, there was no demonstrable divergence in the official Soviet and Chinese views on the issue of a special session of the Security Council. The Chinese and Soviet press reacted in an identical manner both to Khrushchev's original clear acceptance of Macmillan's proposals and to his later violent and confused charges against the British Prime Minister's alleged modifications of his original plan. The shift in the Sino-Soviet line, as first tersely sketched in the August 4th communique of the Khrushchev-Mao meeting and as later elaborated in the proposal for a special session of the General Assembly, cannot then be attributed to unilateral pressure from Mao alone.

The changed situation which ensued from the recognition of the revolutionary Iraqi government by Greece (on July 30) and by Turkey and Iran (on July 31) meant that the new relationship of forces in the Middle East had been temporarily stabilized and that the major Soviet military-political objective, the disintegration of the Baghdad Pact, had been achieved. To attain the withdrawal of US troops from Lebanon was, under regular procedures of the Security Council, an obvious impossibility, and Khrushchev's letters of July 28—before his visit to Mao—reflected the stalemate reached in the exchange of communications. To break out of this impasse, the dramatic display of Sino-Soviet collaboration through the persons of Khrushchev and Mao served as a perfect instrument.

No more than it was ever possible to prove that Mao "encouraged" Ochab's support of Gomulka in September 1956, "saved" Gomulka in October-November 1956, exerted a "moderating" influence in the orbit during 1957, before becoming the "driving force" against "revisionism" and Tito in late 1957 and 1958, can it be taken as fact that Mao was the catalyst in the Sino-Soviet reaction of early August. There is no more evidence for the case that Mao is the arbiter of Soviet foreign policy today than there was for the case that Suslov and the Stalinists wielded that influence a few months ago.

From the time of his first visit to Mao Tse-tung in the fall of 1954, until today, Khrushchev has obtained Mao Tse-tung's support in every phase of his struggle for supremacy within his own party and within the bloc. He has paid due respect for that support; for example, in 1954 he told the world:

Everyone in his right mind who is prepared to look at the facts and observe the laws of historical progress understands that today, without the participation of the People's Republic of China, international questions cannot be solved, international tension cannot be eased and no peaceful solution of disputes can be achieved. (NCNA, September 30, 1954).

The words are still an axiom of Khrushchev's policy; they are far less likely to be questioned by the realists in Moscow than by some commentators in the West.

The new relationship which is developing between Khrushchev and Mao is, obviously, different from that which existed between Stalin and the latter. There is, however, no reason to fall prey to the illusion that because Khrushchev uses a conference chair instead of a throne, the Sino-Soviet bloc will be weaker in the short run. The long range problem of Sino-Soviet power relations concerns Khrushchev personally as little as it does Mao; that will be a matter for the successors of these two neo-Stalinists.

Herbert Ritvo

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The Soviet "Drang nach Süden"

THE PRESENT SOVIET attempt to secure a political and economic foothold in the Middle East is often regarded as a distinctive policy of the post-Stalin leadership, reflecting a spirit of both flexibility and boldness markedly different from the doggedly cautious foreign policy of the erstwhile Soviet dictator. The truth of the matter, however, is that the current Soviet activity in that area constitutes the third phase of a peculiar *Drang nach Süden* which has been going on for nearly two decades. A brief glance at the historical record will clearly bear this out.

The first move in Soviet Russia's southern drive occurred almost twenty years ago, during the short-lived partnership between the Nazi and Communist dictatorships cemented by the signing of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Non-Agression Pact of August 23, 1939. Confident of his eventual victory over Great Britain, Hitler suggested a four-power pact (Germany, Italy, Japan and the USSR) to divide the British spoils. To work out the details of the new collaborative arrangement, a conference including Molotov, Ribbentrop and Hitler was held in Berlin in November 1940. In addition to a treaty which would be made public, the Nazi leaders proposed a secret agreement regarding the "delineation of their [i.e., of the four powers] prospective spheres of interest." As far as the USSR was concerned, its sphere would stretch "in the direction of the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea." Furthermore, the Montreux Convention regulating traffic in the Turkish Straits would be revised in a sense favorable to the Soviet Union. At the end of the negotiations, Ribbentrop pinpointed the area "south of the Soviet Union in the direction of the Indian Ocean" as the prospective Soviet sphere of influence. Molotov asserted that his government was, in principle, prepared to accept the German suggestions, and he then departed for Moscow in order to submit them to Stalin.[1]

In Moscow the German proposals were discussed and revised. From the available documents it is quite clear that Stalin considered the proposals both too vague and inadequate. Consequently, he instructed Molotov to offer the German Ambassador a counter-proposal (in the form of a "Secret Protocol") in which the Soviet sphere was defined to embrace the areas stretching "south of Batum and Baku in the general direction of the Persian Gulf"—in other words, Iraq, part of Turkey, Syria, and possibly also Lebanon, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. Had the protocol been signed, the road might have been opened for Russia's penetration and expansion into the Arab and Persian world.

Hitler's decision to attack the USSR put an end to this first phase of the Soviet Mid-Eastern project. The second phase emerged in 1945 when Moscow, flushed with victory and facing new allies, came out with a far-reaching program of southward aggrandizement which, in effect, aimed at achieving the same results as had been projected five years earlier, during the Molotov-Ribbentrop negotiations. The form, of course, was recast: no longer was it to appear as naked colonialism, but rather as the rightful claim of a victorious nation. If anything, however, the new program was elaborated in far greater detail than it had been in Hitler's time, no doubt because it now appeared more real and more feasible.

As subsequent developments demonstrated, the Soviet program embraced: (1) the Balkans; (2) part of the Arab nations in Africa; (3) military and commercial bases in the Mediterranean; (4) the Straits and Istanbul; (5) northeastern Turkey; and (6) northern Iran. For the purpose of this account, Soviet attempts to take over the Balkans (Greece, Yugoslavia and Albania), which in a certain sense constitute a separate chapter in Moscow's postwar foreign policy, will not be described.

The Arab Nations

The area in North Africa that Stalin had set his eyes on comprised the former Italian, French, and Spanish Mediterranean empires. As a first step toward achieving his goal, the Soviet leader decided to take an active part in the negotiations concerning the Italian colonies. At Potsdam, Stalin and Molotov requested Libya as a Soviet "trusteeship" (the term "trusteeship" was, of course, viewed by Moscow as a hypocritical euphemism for "colony," but only in cases where Western nations were to be the trustees), and evinced lively interest in Eritrea, on the Red Sea.

[1] The above and subsequent quotations referring to this period are taken from the German documents which came into the hands of the Allies after the Second World War and were published under the title of *Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939-1941* (edited by Raymond James Sontag and James Stuart Beddie, Department of State, Washington, D. C., 1948), pp. 221-259.

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The majority of Libya's population is Arab; in the cities of Eritrea the majority is likewise Arab. With Libya, a member of the Arab League, in Soviet hands, the Soviet Union would be established as a major colonial power in the Arab world. Situated between Tunis and Egypt, it would serve as a means of influencing and exerting pressure upon the eastern as well as western Arabs. The Red Sea and the port of Massawa would open the way to Ethiopia, with its large Eastern Christian population. An interest in the Suez, which would then appear legitimate, would make the Soviet government a major political power at Port Said.

In September 1945 the Soviet government formally requested trusteeship over Tripolitania, which it correctly viewed as the most promising part of Libya. Moscow insisted on individual trusteeship, rejecting condominium with another power in the administration of the area. In the Conferences of Foreign Ministers, Vyacheslav Molotov proclaimed Soviet interest in the Mediterranean and Africa, particularly in Tripolitania; the Soviet Union, he said, would like to assume the role of an individual trustee of this last-mentioned area and was fully qualified to do so. As far as Eritrea was concerned, Molotov told a press conference: "I shall not conceal that the Soviet Union has an interest in this question and can be helpful in deciding it."[2] Finally, at the Conference of Foreign Ministers in Paris in April 1946, Molotov formally requested control over the port of Massawa, in Eritrea.

Not yet realizing the real intent behind the Soviet program, U.S. Secretary of State Edward Stettinius, in a conversation with Molotov, asserted that in his view the Soviet Union was "eligible" for trusteeship. Molotov then tried to base his demand on this "promise". In the personal reminiscences of James F. Byrnes, who succeeded Stettinius as Secretary of State, there is an interesting passage which throws a good deal of light on Soviet diplomacy—and the Soviet mentality:

He [Molotov] repeated this so often, I finally said: "In the United States any citizen is eligible to become President, but that does not mean every citizen is going to be President. If you keep repeating that there is a commitment to support any request you make for a trusteeship, you will soon come to believe it yourself." I saw I had not convinced him, so I tried again. "If I tell a man I think he is eligible to own a house, I do not mean that if he asks for the Soviet Embassy I must support his demand for the house." That did not help. He still professed to believe that because of Secretary Stettinius' statement it is our duty to find a satisfactory territory for the Soviet Union to administer as trustee. Those were the opening arguments. With variations and embellishments they were repeated throughout the next sixteen months until it became clear the issue could not be settled at present.[3]

Molotov's basic argument was the USSR's new stature in world affairs. He told Byrnes:

The Soviet Union should take the place that is due it, and therefore should have bases in the Mediterranean for its merchant fleet.[4]

The Soviet demands were supported at that time by the French, but they met with stubborn opposition on the part of Great Britain. When Molotov became convinced that Britain's opposition could not be overcome, he shifted to a proposal for "collective rule" with Italy in Tripolitania; this proposal, too, was rejected. In the end, none of Molotov's proposals was accepted. The reason was, of course, that by that time Soviet intentions—as manifested in the piecemeal aggressions in Eastern Europe—were no longer in doubt. Against the background of Moscow's unilateral course in that part of the world, its claim to a place in the collective administration of colonies could hardly be accepted in good faith.

The Mediterranean

The Soviet program for the Mediterranean consisted of three parts: first, the old Montreux convention of 1936, which regulated traffic in the Black Sea straits, must be abrogated and replaced by a more favorable agreement; second, the straits must become a "joint" Soviet-Turkish possession; third, the Italian Dodecanese Islands should be developed as a Soviet naval base. The intent was to make the Dodecanese not only a commercial outpost, but a strategic base in the vicinity of the Suez Canal as well.

The old Russian claim to the Dardanelles, which had been repudiated by Lenin after the Bolshevik revolution, was revived at the start of World War II. It was Molotov who told Hitler and Ribbentrop, in November 1940, that the Soviet Union considered the Montreux convention "worthless" and demanded "effective" (*i.e.*, not merely paper) guarantees concerning the Straits as a pre-condition for a stable Soviet-German-Japanese alliance.[5] In June 1945, after the defeat of Germany, Molotov presented a new set of demands to Turkey. The Soviet insistence on military bases in the Dardanelles, and the specious offer to defend the Straits "jointly with Turkey," were both aimed at establishing the Soviet Union as the dominant power in those areas and at making Istanbul a Soviet-dominated city.

[2] *New York Times*, September 19,1945. Of interest in this connection is the statement that appeared somewhat later in the pro-Soviet English weekly *Anglo-Soviet News Bulletin*, to the effect that "Tripolitania and Eritrea are as much outposts of the southern republics of the USSR as Egypt is an outpost of India" (London, January 31, 1946).

[3] James F. Byrnes, *Speaking Frankly*, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1947, p. 96.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] See *Nazi-Soviet Relations*, pp. 244, 245, and 252.

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The pressure on Turkey—in the form of a long series of diplomatic notes—continued throughout 1946, but, as in the case of the request for trusteeship, it met with consistent and growing opposition on the part of Great Britain and the United States. Molotov, for instance, in his note to Turkey of August 8, 1946, said:

Turkey and the Soviet Union, as the Powers most interested in and capable of ensuring the freedom of merchant shipping and security in the Straits, should jointly organize the defense of the Straits to prevent their use by other states for purposes hostile to the Black Sea Powers.

The Truman Doctrine, announced in March 1947, served in part to save Turkey's independence in the face of Stalin's political offensive. Until 1953 the Soviet government did not consider the refusal final, but only as a "postponement." Stalin never retracted his demands on Turkey, and the result was a state of permanent tension between Moscow and Ankara during the postwar years.

In the light of the current Soviet drive to abolish "all military bases on foreign soil," the history of the Soviet attempts to secure bases in the Mediterranean is particularly significant and instructive.

Turkey and Iran

The Soviet program for the east related to Turkish territories bordering on the Caucasus. From June 1945 on, Molotov pressed a claim for the areas of Kars and Ardahan, contending that they were former Russian territories annexed by Turkey after World War I. (They had belonged to Turkey until 1878). Not content with this, Moscow instigated, at the end of 1945 and beginning of 1946, a "spontaneous" Georgian demand for a piece of Turkish territory along the Black Sea coast, amounting to about 200 miles and stretching down to the borders of Iraq and Iran. The reason given was that centuries ago this area had belonged to the Kingdom of Georgia. A characteristic example of this campaign—and one which, in fact, went farther than the original demand—was an article in *Pravda* by the Secretary of the Georgian Communist party, in which he demanded the fulfillment of the age-old dream of the Georgian people"—namely, eight Turkish provinces, actually almost twenty per cent of Turkey's territory.[6] On the same day the Soviet radio broadcast these "Georgian demands." In the United States a pro-Soviet "Armenian National Committee" distributed a map of Armenia prepared under the direction of President Wilson in 1920, showing a large East-Turkish territory as part of the realm of independent Armenia.[7] In Syria and Lebanon, too, an "Armenian National Council," consisting of Armenian refugees, feverishly supported the Soviet Union.

With these large Turkish territories in the east incorporated into the Soviet Union, and with Istanbul in the west practically in Soviet hands, Turkey would either remain a small, impotent nation or be forced to become a member of the projected Soviet mid-eastern empire. The USSR would then border on Iraq and Syria, and her position in the Arab world would become predominant.

Although never realized because of the deteriorating international climate, these demands of Stalin's were not withdrawn during his lifetime. They were the subsoil of the Soviet-Turkish animosity which lasted until the death of the Soviet ruler.

In the neighboring territory of Iran, a breakthrough to the south was planned in 1945-46, when Soviet troops were to be withdrawn from Iran in accordance with the agreements of January 2, 1942. An "Azerbaijan Democratic Party" which emerged in northern Iran in 1945 under Soviet occupation, with the veteran Communist Jaafar Pishevari as its leader, seized power and set up a pro-Soviet government in Tabriz. Soviet troops in Iran did not permit Iranian forces to enter the north, and Moscow refused to comply with her commitment to withdraw. About the same time, a similar pro-Soviet regime was set up in Kurdistan, another area in northern Iran. The two territories, which lay between the Turkish-Iraq border and the Caspian Sea, had evidently been groomed for incorporation into the adjoining Soviet republics.

In the end, under strong political pressure on the part of the Western powers, Stalin agreed to withdraw his army from Iran, but not until Iran had consented (April 1946) to form a mixed Soviet-Iranian oil company in the northern provinces adjoining the Soviet Union.

Thus ended the second (1945-49) Soviet drive to the south. From all her far-reaching plans and projects, Soviet Russia obtained in war booty only tiny Albania—a trifle compared to the grandiose vistas conjured up in the minds of her leaders.

But the vistas did not fade. Even though the initiator of the great plans is dead and his chief collaborator lives out his days in Outer Mongolia, other members of the old "team" are still active, and the new men, too, carry on the work of their predecessors. The tactics have changed, but the goal remains the same: to bring the Middle East under the complete control of the USSR.

David J. Dallin

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[6] *Pravda,* February 25, 1946.

[7] *A Memorandum Relating to the Armenian Question,* issued by the Armenian National Committee, April 1945; The *Frontier Between Armenia and Turkey as Decided by President Woodrow Wilson November 22, 1920.* Armenian National Committee (no place of publication or date given).

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